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MARCH 1991 A MONTHLY REVIEW EDITED BY R. EMMETT TYRRELL, JR.

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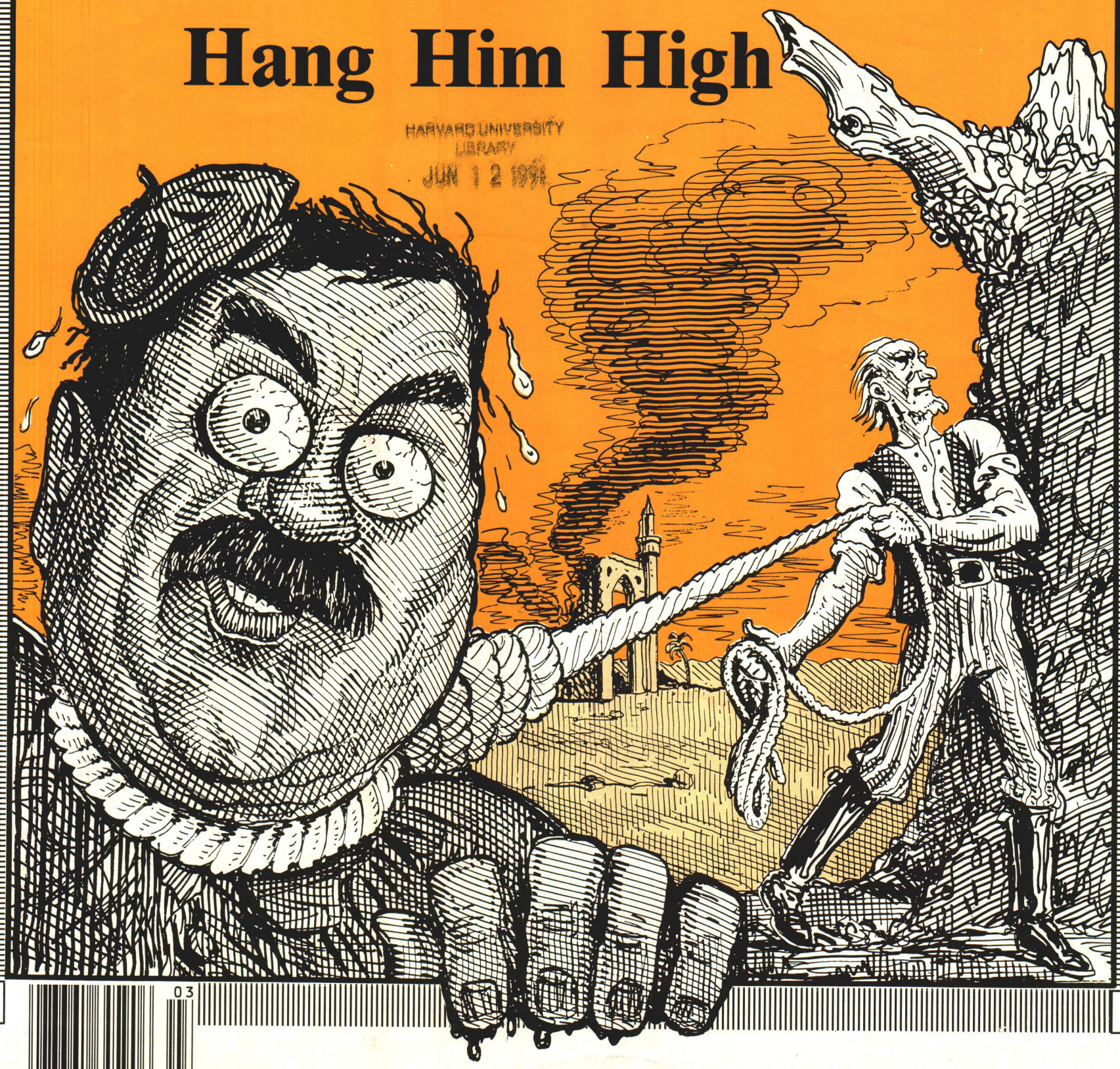

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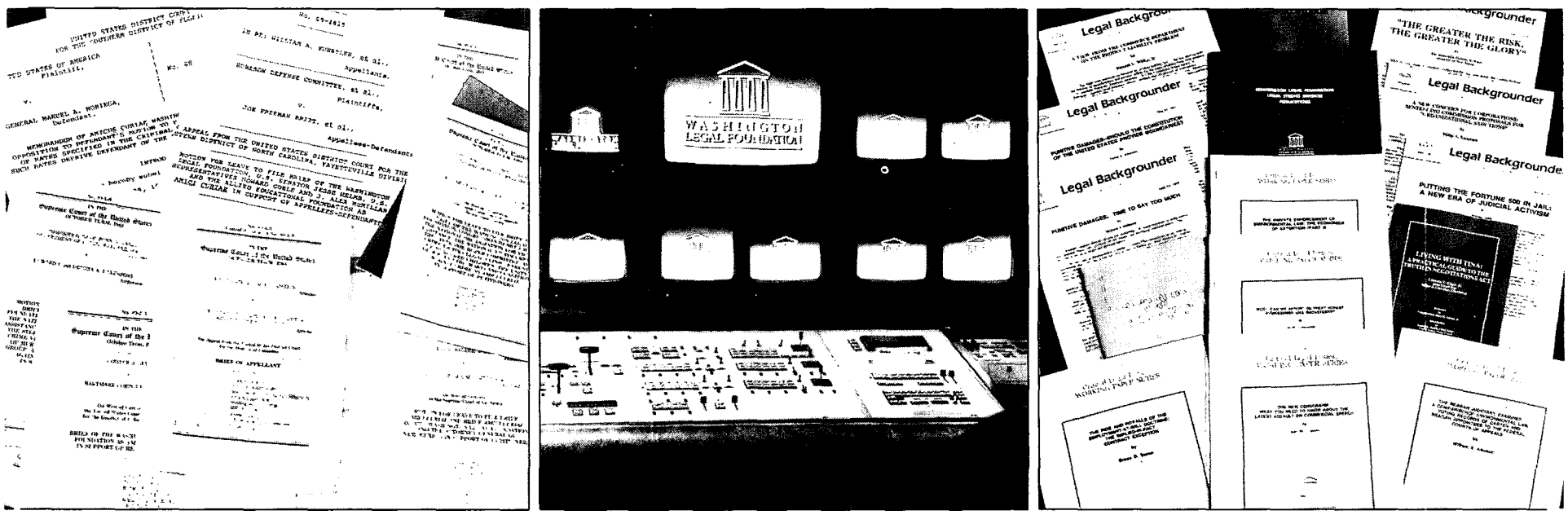

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You deserve a factual look at...

The U.N. and the Middle East
Is it a proper forum to sit in judgment

From following what's happening in the United Nations it's easy to come to the conclusion that Israel is the source of most of the problems in the world. And that, if Israel were only less "intransigent" and if it would yield the administered territories of the "West Bank" and Gaza, peace would descend on the Middle East.

What are the facts?

■ The United Nations seems obsessed with Israel. The level of U.N. preoccupation with Israel is totally out of proportion with events in that country. In the course of the last ten years, the General Assembly has entertained 175 hostile resolutions dealing with Israel and the "Palestinian problem". During that entire year it did not once criticize any of the Arab countries. Every year, the General Assembly goes through the charade of considering the expulsion of Israel from the United Nations. In 1985, the General Assembly of the U.N. covered itself with everlasting shame by declaring that Zionism is racism. The Security Council has proposed numerous anti-Israel resolutions during the last three years. All of them would have passed unanimously or with lopsided majorities had it not been for vetoes of most of them by the United States.

■ Recently, the attention of the United Nations was particularly engaged by two incidents in Israel, namely the killing of seven Arab laborers by a demented Israeli solitary gunmen, and by the death of 17 Arab on the Jerusalem Temple Mount. In that incident, a mob of 4,000 Arabs, thrown into a frenzy by their clerics, loosed fusillades of rocks and other missiles on Jewish worshippers gathered for prayers by the Western Wall. In both cases, the Security Council dropped all other business, promulgated anti-Israel resolutions and requested that teams of "observers" be sent to Israel, presumably to report on the alleged abuses perpetrated on the "Palestinians" by that country and by its government. One wonders why, regardless of the merits of the anti-Israel accusations, any "observers" at all would be required. Israel, and the territories administrated by it, are not some remote region in some outlying area of a dark empire. There are more journalists, photographers, television crews, reporters, parliamentary delegations, professional groups, fact finding missions, and human rights activists there than in any other spot on the globe. Never in modern history has there been a spot so microscopically and so meticulously inspected as the small country of Israel. One questions why a delegation of U.N. observers would be required and what mischievous purposes their observations could possibly serve.

■ The obsession of the United Nations with Israel and its alleged violations is the more remarkable considering that organizations's total disregard of the unspeakable barbarities of so many other nations in the Middle East. For instance, the Security Council meeting that resolved to send a delegation to Israel to investigate "abuses" was inspired by the PLO, whose numberless outrages -- including the killing of Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics, the bombing of tourist buses, old-age homes, synagogues, airports, airliners, and so much more -- have never received the slightest attention by the U.N. Nor have the unspeakable human rights abuses and sickening crimes by the Arab states ever been discussed in that body. These crimes, instigated and supported by Arab governments, include the slaughter in 1982 of over 20,000 Syrian citizens in Hama, at the command of Hafez Assad, that country's president (and our most recent ally!); the poison-gassing of over 5,000 Iraqi Kurdish citizens by Saddam Hussein; over 100,000 Lebanese civilians killed by PLO gunmen, and other militias and terrorist groups; Egyptian troops cold-bloodedly killing over 100 rioting police in 1986; the Algerian police indiscriminatingly machine-gunning hundreds of its own citizens in a few days of rioting; the Libyans assassinating untold numbers of their opponents inside the country and outside; hundreds of Iranian pilgrims ruthlessly being gunned down by the Saudis during the pilgrimage to Mecca; the hundreds of thousands being killed in the Sudan in inter-racial massacres, Lebanon's rape by Syria, and so much more. The United Nations did not concern itself with any of these.

Among the hypocritical accusers of Israel in the U.N. Security Council are the French and the Soviets, merchants of death who have supplied Iraq with the weaponry, the materials and the technology to produce chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons. Without them, the present situation would not have arisen. These same cynics bitterly denounced Israel for destroying the Iraqi nuclear capability in 1981. Had Israel not done that, Iran would now in all likelihood be an atomic wasteland and no U.S. or U.N. presence in the area would now be possible. And such stalwart democrats and practitioners of human rights as Yemen, Cuba, Zaire, and Malaysia also sit on the Security Council and cynically condemn Israel, the only people in the entire Middle East that have a freely elected government and that contributed to the Western legacy the very concepts of justice and of human rights. Is the U.N. a proper forum to sit in judgment about Israel and about the events in the middle East? The evidence is clear and the answer is obvious.

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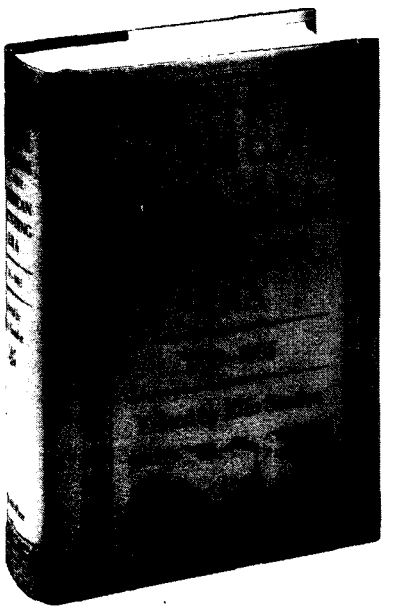

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THE CONTINUING CRISIS

• January has passed, and the Bush Administration's vigorous measures against tyranny worldwide have begun to pay off. At Stanford University the so-called president, Mr. Donald Kennedy, seems to have capitulated to federal accusations that the Kennedy junta grossly overcharged the government in administering government contracts. Besieged by investigators from nearly half a dozen federal agencies, including the Defense Department, the Palo Alto strongman agreed to return nearly half a million dollars, a paltry share of the hundreds of millions of dollars that the tightly controlled university bagged in research grants. While charging a whopping 74 percent administrative cost, the university redirected taxpayers' monies towards a presidential cedar closet, antiques, a presidential yacht, $2,000 worth of flowers monthly, and the refurbishment of a grand piano on which, it is authoritatively rumored, President Kennedy plays martial tunes of dubious taste. Attempting to keep the lid on what is beginning to look like a major scandal, the dictator—photographed in the *New York Times* wearing a military jersey—denied any wrongdoing; but last month government sources speculated that Stanford's illicit expenditures might reach $200 million, and no federal agency has yet begun to investigate the numerous charges of human rights violations on campus or charges that the bespectacled tyrant maintains a private army disguised as librarians, who monitor the campus for signs of individuality and rational intelligence.

• In Albuquerque, New Mexico, a DWI case that could capture the imagination of college students all over the country ended unfortunately for state representative Mr. Ray Vargas when District Judge Richard Traub adjudged Mr. Vargas guilty of driving while squiffed. Judge Traub rejected Mr. Vargas's defense that he suffers from a delightful intestinal disease called candidiasis, a disorder that makes Mr. Vargas, as he slurred it, a "human brewery." Apparently Mr. Vargas becomes "involuntarily intoxicated" with a minimum purchase of alcohol—a claim that, if true, will attract for him large and intent audiences on the college lecture circuit. Congressmen solemnized the opening of the 102nd Congress by promptly abrogating yet another of their 1990 budget agreements with the President. The belching of cows will be studied by the University of Washington, according to the terms of a $70,000 Environmental Protection Agency grant to study environmental warming (if there is environmental warming). The gray existence of the federal bureaucrat suddenly promised unanticipated delights when the Food and Drug Administration announced plans to regulate breast implants, beginning in March.

• On January 16, Mr. Robert S. Bennett, special counsel to the Senate Ethics Committee, sought harsh punishment for three senators accused of shady dealings with savings and loan prestidigitator Mr. Charles H. Keating. The senators are the Hon. Alan Cranston, the Hon. Dennis DeConcini, and the Hon. Donald W. Riegle, who, according to Mr. Bennett, perjured himself. All three, incidentally, have long records of being goody-goody Liberals. The Nocturnal Hair Snipper of South Lake Tahoe, California, has had the book thrown at him for his unprecedented hair-cutting attacks on three indigenous women. El Dorado County Superior Judge Terrence Finney imposed a four-year maximum sentence on Mr. David Warren Mordhorst, 35, the noted radiator repairman. Until Mr. Mordhorst's arrest last July, he "held women in this community in a state of terror," testifies Prosecutor Sean O'Brien, who himself has a fine head of hair. Some women were going around wearing football helmets, and a lot of the menfolk were worried, too.

• Moscow made repeated hostile acts against democratic aspirations in the Baltics. Former Washington, D.C., mayor Marion Barry was offered a teaching position in the criminal justice department of the University of the District of Columbia. Both houses of Congress backed Mr. Bush's use of force in the Persian Gulf. And, following the precedent of the Old Cowboy's 1986 attack on Libya, President George H. W. Bush unleashed American air power over Kuwait just as the evening news began on January 16. Mr. Saddam Hussein seemed to respond by attacking Tel Aviv with Scud missiles, though he may have had more personal motives. According to the *Observer* of London, scientists at Tel Aviv University are closing in on a cure for halitosis, which, if accomplished, could destroy the Baghdad strongman's system of control within his Baath party. Dr. Mel Rosenberg, head of the Laboratory of Oral Microbiology in Tel Aviv, is convening a first-ever world symposium in Mexico this April during which he will reveal a secret weapon for eliminating the elusive microorganism that is at the seat of bad breath. In Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University sophomores celebrated the year's first snowfall by stripping naked and disporting in the "Nude Olympics," a Princeton tradition going back centuries to the time when James Madison and his peers practiced it on a more modest scale and recognized its weirdness.

• During the month, majorities in support of the President's prosecution of the war increased almost everywhere but in Berkeley, California (where doubtless many of the resident intelligentsia are under the impression that President Saddam Hussein is a Communist or at least a hippie), and the District of Columbia, where only 44 percent of those polled by a *Washington Post*/ABC News poll supported the war. The rest pretty much voiced the concerns of Miss Eurica Rogers, a Capitol Hill resident who averred, "If I were in Colorado or somewhere in the middle of the country, I don't think I'd be so terrified and scared. I can imagine me trying to duck bombs, trying to find my baby." Well, Miss Rogers, if you did not listen to so much rock and roll, your head would not be so full of maudlin tunes. Or Miss Rogers could move to New York City, where Miss Gloria Ponder called a city ambulance to transport her four-year-old son, Damien Escobar, to the hospital, only to have the ambulance drivers engage in fisticuffs at her front door. One driver summoned help, and five police cars arrived, along with two unmarked detective cars and four more ambulances, plus an Emergency Medical Service supervisor who broke up the fight and sent Miss Ponder and her bruised ambulance drivers on their way. Thereupon, Miss Ponder's drivers drove so wildly that Miss Ponder suffered bodily damage, as did her son, but before her ambulance reached the hospital another fight broke out. Miss Ponder extricated herself from the ambulance and hailed a police car to take her to the emergency room. She was eventually notified that her drivers had a history of fights but were otherwise competent and well liked in their community.

• Late in the month, trials of the freedom demonstrators of Tiananmen Square began in Peking. In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 62-year-old Miss Philomena Abruzzese won a $10 million law suit against plastic surgeons who reduced the size of her breasts to an unseemly dimension. From Seattle, Washington, comes word that the Navy has decided to end its use of dolphins as underwater guards, and in Amble, England, police continued to investigate charges that a diver sexually assaulted a bottle-nosed dolphin named Freddie—a move sure to split the United Kingdom's animal rights and homosexual rights communities. In Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 27-year-old Mr. Salimu Hatibu, a convicted thief, fled from a courtroom, plunged into a river, and was immediately eaten by a crocodile. In Olathe, Kansas, an unnamed bandit wearing a George Bush mask was arrested when he asked the manager of a fast-food store that he had just robbed to jump-start his getaway car. In New York City, police captured suspected burglar Mr. Leon Jones after he got himself locked inside a grocery store he was burglarizing. And in Baltimore, Maryland, a man who is suspected of making 3,000 obscene telephone calls over twenty-four years has been arrested, and he is not on the faculty or in the administration of any of the area's great universities. The caller, a

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Mr. Victor Herbert Gardner, 46, did, however, make many of his calls to college dormitories, asking his interlocutors to undress and touch themselves in indecent places.

• Finally, on the culture scene, twenty-four members of Pittsburgh's Action Against Rape protested to the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust for its shocking decision to emblazon its T-shirts with Miss Dorothy Parker's timeless asseveration, "You can lead a horticulture, but you cannot make her think." In their delicious reproof to the Trust, the anti-rape gals yawped, "It is insulting to women who earn or have earned their living as prostitutes, implying that they are unintelligent, unthinking, unappreciative of culture." According to Miss Anita Malinger, an outspoken opponent of rape in the Pittsburgh area, or anyplace else in Pennsylvania, for that matter, Miss Parker "was lacking in consciousness for people working in the sex industry." Miss Parker, who died in 1967, could not be reached for comment, though Miss Holly Van Dine of the Trust offered the dubious exegesis that "I don't think it was Dorothy Parker's intention to insult prostitutes." That's a good one, Holly!

—RET

CORRESPONDENCE

The Nader Letters

No one was more surprised than I that Ralph Nader publicly ignored "Congress, Nader, and the Ambulance Chasers," my cover story in the September 1990 *American Spectator*—especially since my sources reported he was furious. After all, Nader's trademark is the *ad hominem* attack. In late December I learned from Robert Joost, one of my sources, that Nader was seeking a written retraction of Joost's comments in my article. Nader's move followed an article in the *Boston Globe* ("Tougher Time for Ralph Nader," November 5), which picked up Joost's quote from *The American Spectator* that Nader was "an agent at large" for the trial bar.

Nader's request for a retraction came in a letter to Joost on December 19, in which he suggested a meeting, to be arranged by one of Nader's friends, Georgetown University law professor Joe Page. Joost replied on Christmas Eve with a letter clarifying his position. In January, Page told Joost that the meeting was off, reports Joost, who then asked *The American Spectator* to publish Nader's letter to him and his reply. Both follow. Here is the paragraph that Nader in his letter to Joost calls "drivel":

> Today, Nader's denial of trial bar support is ludicrous; its footprints are everywhere. Robert Joost, who was chief counsel for the Senate Commerce Committee during battles over federal no-fault auto insurance in the 1970s, says that Nader is "an agent at large" for the trial bar, and that they return the favor by "tithing." From a $100,000 court award, $40,000 goes to the lawyer. From that $40,000, the lawyer gives $5,000 to the national ATLA PAC [Assn. of Trial Lawyers of America Political Action Committee], $5,000 to the state ATLA organization, and $5,000 to Nader, Joost says.
>
> *—Robert Stowe England*
> *Arlington, Virginia*

Dec. 19, 1990

Robert Joost, Esq.
Washington, D.C.

Dear Bob:

Joe Page told me that he spoke with you about the quote attributed to you in the *Spectator* (see drivel attached) and you observed that, as the quote relates to me, it was not accurate. Since this quote was reused in the *Boston Globe* last month, I need to have a short note from you declaring its inaccuracy. Or even better, a letter to the *Spectator*. My position on product liability, no fault etc. has been consistent since before we met in the very early Sixties. Which is why I could not believe that you were quoted accurately, not to mention their absurd attribution of the figures used in the attached, marked paragraph.

Good to locate you, even for this reason. If you can get Joe to lunch someday, give me a ring.

Sincerely,
Ralph
[Ralph Nader]

December 24, 1990

Ralph Nader, Esq.
Washington, D.C.

Dear Ralph:

Thank you for your letter of December 19, 1990.

Let me reconstruct what I said, and what I did not say, to Robert England of *The American Spectator*. I did *not* say that trial lawyers "tithe" to you, although I said (and believe) that dedicated trial lawyers . . . do "tithe" to the Attorney's Trust Fund in Washington and to the State associations. I used the word tithe to mean a regular voluntary transfer of money to an organization or individual to be used towards the realization of a shared objective. I did not use the word to mean a 10 percent contribution.

Back in 1971, I was told, at a meeting of ATLA Key Men, that the trial lawyers in Texas had formed a group called "LIFT" (Lawyers Involved for Texas), and that the trial lawyers in Ohio had formed a group called "ADOPT" (Attorneys Devoted to Ohio People Totally). Trial lawyers who signed up for LIFT or ADOPT had a fixed sum of money withdrawn automatically from their bank accounts and deposited with the LIFT/ADOPT trust fund account. The development of these Funds may have been the beginning of tithing for personal profit/group aggrandizement. The proceeds of LIFT and ADOPT were used in attempts to defeat legislators opposed to trial lawyers. The simplicity of this method of financing, and the power inherent in it (I was told that six out of eight members of the Texas Senate whom LIFT took on in 1970 were defeated by ATLA-supported candidates), were factors that led me to testify as a whistle-blower, before the Senate Commerce Committee in May of 1971. I described LIFT and ADOPT in my testimony, on May 7, 1971, but I did not use the word "tithing" to refer to trial lawyer contributions to these Funds. I described LIFT and ADOPT to the reporter for *The American Spectator*, and I called them tithing at that time.

I told the reporter that the trial lawyers have a great sense of self-preservation. In nine years as a full-time (6 yrs.) and part-time (3 yrs.) employee of NACCA [ATLA's predecessor]/ATLA, I was struck by how willing certain key members were to contribute time and money to individuals and projects that might strengthen the underpinnings of the system through which many of them achieved great wealth. For example, I got the impression that a lot of time and money had been spent advising, encouraging, and supporting a lawyer named Ralph Nader—a lawyer who was not afraid to challenge the Nation's largest manufacturing company, who organized a crusade for safety, who believed the tort liability system should be preserved and strengthened, and who attacked insurance companies. . . .

I did not mention it in my 1971 testimony, but I believe that NACCA/ATLA leaders, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, regarded you as one of "their" assets. The way your name was mentioned convinced me that the leaders of NACCA/ATLA regarded you as a resource subject to their control, provided they made sure you received needed financial contributions.

In my opinion, leading trial lawyers contribute money and resources to you now, to an even greater extent than in the 1960s. You promote, with pure and idealistic motives, objectives which permit them, with possibly less pure motives, to make a great deal of money. I did not mention this to the *Spectator* reporter, but I am intrigued by the fact that you seem to turn up, in the last three years, in each State where the trial lawyers are on the defensive because there is a no-fault or choice no-fault bill or referendum pending: California (1988), Rhode Island (1990), and Arizona (1990). You may only be guilty of "conscious parallelism" rather than intent to deceive the American consumer, but you must realize what a god-send you have been to the trial lawyers. I would be surprised, frankly, if the trial lawyers did not show appreciation to you for your helpfulness to them. Their gifts to you do not, in my judgment, constitute "tithing" because tithing, in my semantic usage, connotes a greater degree of regularity than I believe characterizes trial lawyer underwriting and giving to your operational entities and projects.

You have never supported, to my knowledge, a no-fault auto insurance bill or law, although I have heard that you support the Michigan no-fault law. The Michigan no-fault law is now grievously wounded (because the Supreme Court of Michigan gutted its threshold and ruled that the determination of whether the threshold had been met should be a question of fact for the jury rather than a question of law for the judge). If you really support the Michigan no-fault law, you should urge the Michigan legislature to amend the law to fix it.

You say in your letter that "[m]y position on . . . no fault etc. has been consistent since before we met in the early Sixties." I do not understand this sentence. You do not say what your position was in the early 60s. In fact, it would have been impossible for you to have a position then because the modern concept of no-fault auto insurance was not developed until 1964, with the publication of *Basic Protection for the Traffic Victim* by Judge Keeton and Professor O'Connell. . . .

If you supported, by public testimony and appearances, a "fixing" of the Michigan no-fault law or the enactment of a fair bill that allows consumers to choose for themselves the kind of auto insurance they will buy, you

(continued on page 40)

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EDITORIALS

THE WORST BOOK OF THE YEAR

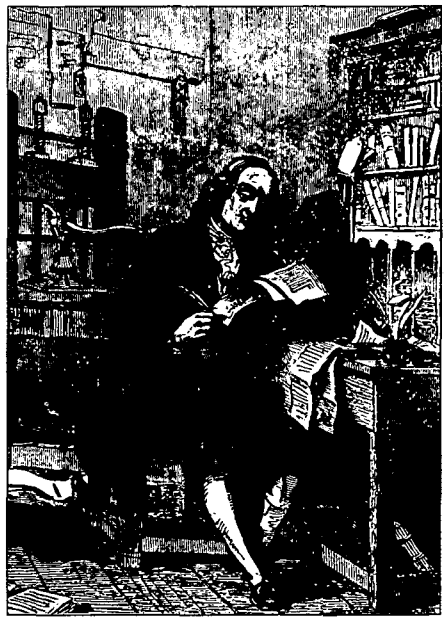
by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

It is a fact—well known and long established, lamentable in these patriotic times but inescapable—that in no country on earth are the so-called educated so frequently suckered into buying books fit for idiots as in America—Monaco's sophisticates read a lot of claptrap, too. In recognition of this national trait, my colleagues at *The American Spectator* annually certify the worst books of the year with the J. Gordon Coogler Award for dreadfulness. The award is widely considered to be made in jest except among Upper East Side Manhattanites trapped in the Midwest who are grateful to learn of what dismal opuscula are popular among travelers on the New York-to-Washington shuttle and American ladies at fat removal clinics in the Caribbees.

J. Gordon Coogler was a jerkwater poet of magisterial egotism and middling talent, who would without doubt get along swimmingly with the winner of this year's Coogler for fiction, Kevin Phillips, author of *The Politics of Rich and Poor: Wealth and the American Electorate in the Reagan Aftermath.* The Coogler for non-fiction goes to Phillips, too. And if we gave a Coogler for plagiarism, that also would go to Phillips. He has lifted a good many of his lubricious facts and lurid analyses from a 1986 report by Congressman David Obey's Joint Economic Committee. Thus, Phillips argues that during the 1980s—one of the most prosperous decades in the Republic's prosperous history—there was an unparalleled drop in family income. Tremendous economic disparities widened, allowing fat cats to build palaces on the hill and sending the rest of us downhill. Americans lived in fear of the tyrant Reagan and longed for the days of Carter—any Carter. And one other thing: your landlord is now or soon will be, according to Phillips, the descendant of a Japanese bomber pilot.

That is the kind of whoop-whoop that has earned Phillips honors and honoraria this year among the Republic's so-called educated readers. Has the spread of higher education in the land really been such a boon? Certainly, the majority of adult Americans recognizes college for what it is, a rite of passage, as scarification among the Fulani of Nigeria is a rite of passage. College should be taken *cum grano salis* unless one studies something serious, for instance, business administration or science. Unfortunately, there remain Americanos incapable of distinguishing useful learning from the apocalyptic stuff dispensed by those glassy-eyed profs born of the 1960s. They graduate full of baleful expectations and thrive on cheap prophecy.

Consequently, there is a ready market for books of preposterosity. Think back to such pishposh as Ravi Batra's *The Great Depression of 1990*, originally predicted for the 1980s, or Carl Sagan's excogitations on Nuclear Winter in *The Cold and the Dark.* (He's now back with Nuclear Winter II, *A Path Where No Man Thought.*) As American arms now swat back the fifth largest army on earth, using bombs of prodigious precision and a rudimentary anti-missile system, the Patriot (a weapon that somehow makes it harder to laugh off Ronald Reagan's program for a Strategic Defense Initiative), recall if you will that bestseller of three years back, Professor Kennedy's overheated *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers.* Among its extravagant points was a yell about how America's days as a superpower were numbered. Doubtless the professor is still yelling somewhere.



Phillips yells too. Yet he yells incomplete thoughts. The middle class suffered catastrophically in Ronald Reagan's 1980s, he shouts. He does not add that the middle class suffered worse in the Carter years and was actually stabilizing its economic condition under Reagan. The middle class family earning $23,593 in 1977 saw its real income drop by $1,488 to $22,105 in 1980. Phillips yells that the very poor suffered drastic cuts in social services under Reagan, which is as inaccurate as his yell that their distance from the rich increased. He yells that the rich got enormously rich, and once again this is only half the yell. After the Reagan tax policy began, the principles of supply-side economics took effect. The rich began bearing a heavier share of taxes. In fact the tax cuts for the rich paid for themselves, made a profit, and brought the upper one-fifth of the population closer to the lower one-fifth, many of whom by 1990 paid no income taxes.

The economy had stabilized by the late 1980s with inflation and unemployment down and productivity up. The real misery for the poorest fifth of the population came from 1974 to 1982, when their share of national income dropped 16 percent.

Now Kevin Phillips is predicting rebellion in the streets against the fat cats. Such dire pronunciamentos are supported by no evidence other than the fact that his book is selling briskly. That is a harbinger not of revolution but only of more bad books and more Cooglers to be awarded next year. Felicitations, Mr. Phillips. □

Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Post *column syndicated by King Features.*

FATHEAD BISHOPS

If, like me, you have had difficulty finding the actual whereabouts of the Rev. Jesse Jackson's nationally televised talk show, help is on the way. There is calamity abroad in the world, and the Rev. Jackson has already leaped to exploit it. He has spoken out against the war with his usual bullet-proof pieties that any response to Saddam other than Elysian passivity would be "immoral," "counterproductive," and so forth and so on. The Rev. Jackson is even now rising up from his own creeping obscurity to make one last lunge at celebrity. Naturally, he opposes our military action in the Gulf; and, if his protests are gaudy enough, perhaps someone somewhere will be able to find his television show.

But the Rev. Jackson's protest is not unique. A goodly number of clergy are also seizing the moment to parade their moral superiority before us. According to Alan Wisdom of Washington's Institute on Religion and Democracy, "Prior to the outbreak of hostilities, the majority of mainline churches and most of the Catholic Bishops opposed force in the Gulf under any circumstances likely to arise, and their anti-war posture went far beyond that taken by the Democratic leadership." Well, being on the immoral side of a political issue is not new to mainline churches. For decades the mainline church of the Soviet Union accepted Stalin and his successors. America's mainline churches were not particularly notable in opposing slavery.

Yet America's mainline clergy are doing more than merely neglecting to respond to evil. They are hamming it up, reiterating all the vacuous platitudes of yesteryear, as though the Gulf were Vietnam and Vietnam had made war unconscionable and forever futile. Once again they present themselves as moral colossi, supposedly engaged in some brave act of truth-telling urgently needed before the combined forces of the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars carry them from their pulpits and consign them to a martyr's death. Alas, no veterans organization is so public-spirited.

Thus the greasepaint moralizers again

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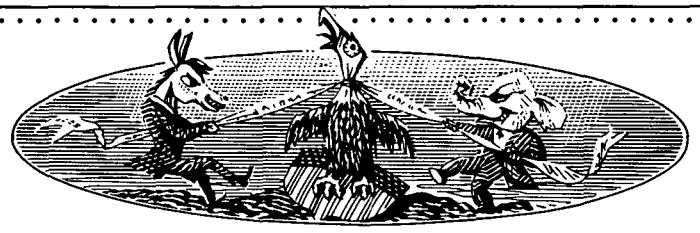
afflict us. In Paramus, New Jersey, Msgr. Frank LoBianco of Our Lady of Visitation Roman Catholic Church urges that parishioners ignore "the country's call to duty" because "It takes a lot of love to forgive those who are evil and unjust to others." Perhaps Msgr. LoBianco would have us disband the country's police forces and instead patrol the mean streets with professionally trained forgivers flushed with love. Let Saddam's rapists and brigands continue their evildoing in Kuwait City. Bold acts of forgiveness will pacify them, and there will be smile buttons everywhere. In Croton-on-Hudson, New York, the Rev. Linda Kimmelman of the Asbury United Methodist Church asks rhetorically "Why war?" and responds cleverly, "Because human greed, lust for power and national self-interest are alive and well. Ask yourself, if the primary export of Kuwait were broccoli and not oil, would we be in this war?" Ha, ha, Rev. Kimmelman; that is a good one. But if broccoli provided the energy to run hospitals, to heat schools, to run a country, surely we would have some moral obligation to ensure the flow of broccoli at stable prices.

Sometimes a point of view simply petrifies in time, as the clergy's anti-war blah surely has. That point of view is no longer capable of discernment or of any fresh cognition whatsoever. Confronted by history with a new script and a new cast of characters, its thoughtless adherents can summon only the bromides that echo in their unchanging past and motionless present. For the anti-war clergy 1991 is 1968; doubtless 1992 will be too. But to those who see the world as it is, some wars are eminently moral.

The barbarities committed by our enemies vindicate our resort to arms. In violation of international law and of the conventions of decency, Saddam's troops invaded Kuwait. They have tortured, raped, and pillaged. They have repeatedly fired on a non-combatant nation, Israel; and they aim not at military installations but at civilian neighborhoods. In past wars they have used weaponry banned by international law. They now commit brutal war crimes against prisoners of war. Still, from comfortable pulpits the clergy sing of virtue. Have they ever heard of sins of omission? □

CAPITOL IDEAS



STANFORD, ANGELA, AND ME

by Tom Bethell

One of the things adults do today that may seem peculiar in the future is hold hands in public. At Stanford University, on the day after the Gulf War began, there was a "non-partisan community gathering" on campus. A crowd of about a thousand students and faculty held hands in the Inner Quad and faced a potted olive tree. Robert Gregg, Dean of the Chapel, wearing a navy blue blazer, with no tie and a white shirt unbuttoned at top, was holding hands with the university president, Donald Kennedy, who was wearing coat and tie and a yellow ribbon tied around his left bicep. He was holding hands with a senior student, who was wearing blue jeans and a yellow ribbon around *her* left bicep. And so on.

Kennedy said that different beliefs and convictions can lead to similar feelings, and so, when considering the Gulf War, "the first thing to ask your fellows is not 'What do you think?' but 'How do you feel?' " That may be a sign of our times—the prescribed subordination of thought to feeling. Perhaps also it is a strange ordering of priorities at a leading institution of higher learning. "Often the answer will be, 'I feel scared, I feel anxious, I feel troubled, I feel concerned,' " Kennedy continued. "You can say, 'So do I, let's start from there.' " A few days later, English professor and poet Denise Levertov expressed her "deep disappointment" with Kennedy's speech. "Here was a large gathering of students and faculty, sitting in their concentric circles with remarkable patience, quietly waiting for the head of our university to say something substantial," she wrote in *Campus Report*. "We heard some beautiful music, we availed ourselves of the opportunity to meditate upon the suffering, present and future, resulting from the outbreak of this war, and when at last the president spoke he was listened to with great attention. But all we were given was a form of what I have heard referred to as 'academic psychobabble.'

"We were advised to be sensitive and tolerant to each others' feelings, to be mutually 'supportive.' That is all very well, but it is not enough. Feelings of outrage were not mentioned. Implicit in the talk was the idea that our feelings would include sadness, apprehension, worry—but outrage? No." Yet this is what "a growing number of people feel," she went on. "It is a mockery of that appropriate response to attempt to diffuse it." A "major Teach-In" was called for, she concluded—not at some vague time in the future but *now*. She, too, stressed feelings, but appended a call for something more instructive.

The teach-in was duly held, a week after the war began, and, along with Bill Evers of Hoover, I was invited to participate. I'd heard the news that the war had begun a few seconds after we touched down at San Francisco airport. The pilot said over the intercom: "We've just heard that the bombing has begun in Iraq." Above all, I felt a sense of shock. The U.S. had launched a preemptive strike against a Third World country because it was not in compliance with a string of United Nations resolutions. If we didn't strike now, when it was still weak, we had been repeatedly told, we would only have to strike later, when it was stronger. The lesson of Munich.

Readers will no doubt be relieved to hear that Your Correspondent was not on the same panel as Angela Davis, professor of Women's Studies at San Francisco State University, and vice-presidential candidate on the Communist party ticket. I did attend her panel, however, which dealt with "lessons from past protest movements." A little Radical Nostalgia here, folks. At the first jam-packed event a professor urged students to come up and sit on the stage. "Oh-ho," a student next to me said to his friend, "authentic sixties teach-in . . . "

Also on the panel with Angela Davis were Michael Lerner, the editor of *Tikkun* magazine, and Clay Carson, a professor of history and editor of the Martin Luther King Papers project. Regenia Gagnier, professor of English, was the moderator.

About 800 students were gathered in the Kresge Auditorium. The panelists sat on stage behind a trestle table covered with plain white paper, three microphones, and bottles of Evian mineral water. A petition was meanwhile making the rounds, expressing "outrage" over the University's "dismal record on affirmative action for faculty." More "diversity" was sought—"in terms of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability and scholarship." At present, apparently, the Stanford professoriate is: 88 percent male; 90.8 percent white; 5.2 percent Asian; 2.1 percent Latino; 1.9 percent black; and 0.72 percent "National American." ("Native," evidently, has gone the way of "Indian.") Surprisingly enough, the university has "failed to keep any statistics on the employment of people with disabilities, and gays & lesbians." Academic tenure, no doubt, has preserved the white male "power structure" intact.

Prof. Gagnier duly invited late-arriving students to come and sit on the stage. Prof. Carson was talking about Americans killing Europeans in World War II and since then killing people of color, when Angela Davis made her late entrance. She was wearing a black top, mauve balloon pants, circular metal earrings the size of piston rings, and a flamboyant mane of braided cornrows. She looked younger than her forty-seven years. She quietly took her seat. Prof. Carson was talking about: "Struggle to eliminate racism . . . struggle to eliminate war . . . struggle for social justice . . . time for struggles for justice and freedom . . . " He also said that he "wouldn't put the task of

Tom Bethell is The American Spectator*'s Washington correspondent and a media fellow at the Hoover Institution.*

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achieving a New World Order in the hands of the United States government," and I agreed with that.

Michael Lerner, who was wearing a yarmulke, was introduced as the former chair of Berkeley SDS, once indicted as a member of the Seattle Seven, and described by J. Edgar Hoover as "one of the most dangerous criminals in America." This was obviously intended to awe the students, and they applauded warmly. Lerner self-deprecatingly noted that "when I was sitting in prison that didn't sound so great." He still retained his enthusiasm for the sixties, with the following caveat: "We saw Americans as evil people rather than deeply scarred as a result of growing up in the capitalist system."

As to the present war, he said we should acknowledge "the legitimate rage of the Arab people," but—and here was the hard part—"Saddam Hussein is no Ho Chi Minh, no Daniel Ortega." In a very sophisticated address, he signaled his support for the war, yet retained the affection of the students—most of whom (but by no means all) seemed opposed to it. "I'm a socialist and I really do support the redistribution of wealth," Lerner said. But Hussein was more bank robber than "courageous socialist redistributionist." Having been caught robbing the bank, he had cunningly tried to pass himself off as Robin Hood. To no avail.

All this made it "problematic" to bring the troops home now. Hussein "should be stopped," but he added that we also should "stop the ground war before it starts." (Translation: We should continue the air war.) And although the U.S. should not be the "primary policeman" in the area, "we do need a policeman, a U.N. policeman." All in all, trying to end the war involved "complex realities," Lerner said. "Israel-bashing" should be "rejected," and above all the conflict won't fit "the old categories of the left." He received a standing ovation.

In her introduction, Prof. Gagnier omitted the Communist party association but noted that in 1970 Angela Davis was charged with murder (of a judge in the Marin County Courthouse), and was once "on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted List." (A jury of eleven whites and one Mexican-American acquitted her of all counts.) Angela was educated at Brandeis and the Sorbonne. After her acquittal and a fundraiser at Madison Square Garden she joined the Communist party and traveled to the Soviet Union, where, by one account, "she was accorded a heroine's welcome."

At the end of the session I spoke to Ms. Davis briefly while she was still on the stage. She told me that she was still a member of the Communist party. Her style throughout the session was not that of the serious Communist, however. She was too flippant, self-preoccupied, and her talk was mainly an exercise in radical name-dropping.

Ostensibly she raised certain issues, but in reality she was saying: Hey kids, I was no mere onlooker in those heady days. . . . Top this if you can. . . . The Soledad Brothers! The Strike Committee at UCLA! Ronald Reagan and the University Regents! The ex-Green Beret SWAT Squads pouring thousands of rounds of ammunition into the Black Panther party headquarters! "I saw them drop dynamite, I saw them shoot back, I saw them, so this is what was going on, there was a war going on!" The Stanford students seemed impressed by this eyewitness testimony. (They seem so young and innocent, these students today. Or am I just growing older?)

She spoke of her work with Toronto lesbians organizing a benefit for "the Mohawk nation"; of speaking to stu-

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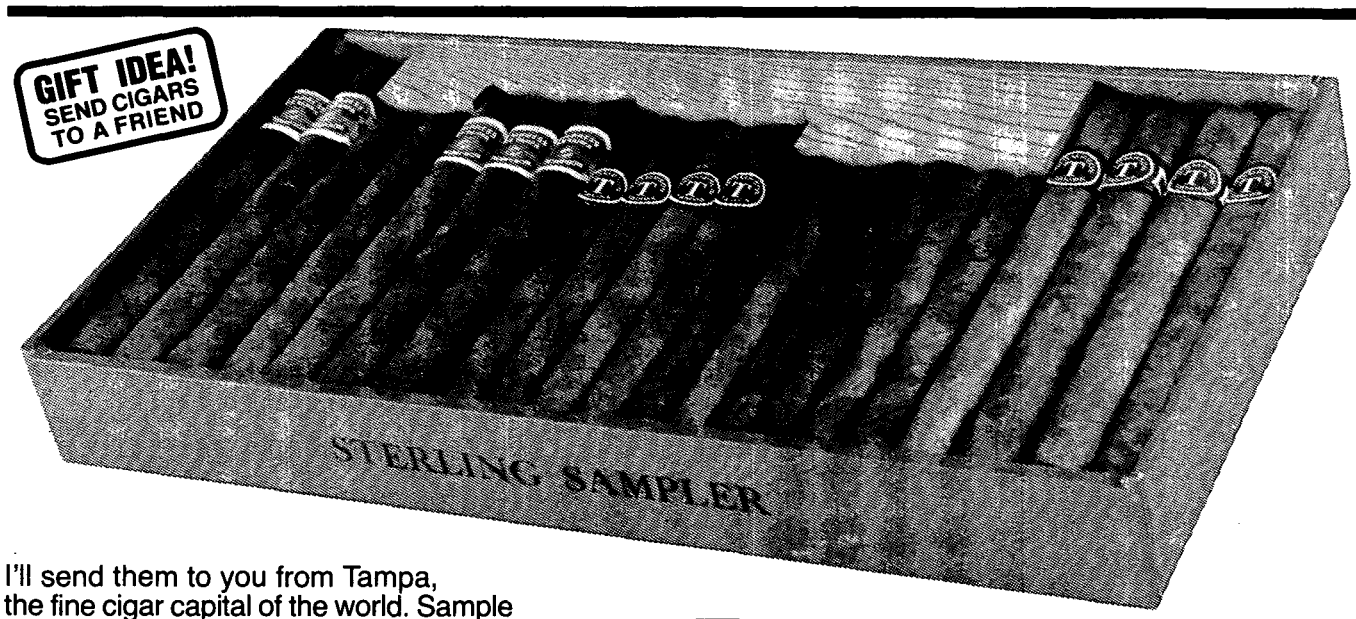

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dents at Santa Cruz, and prisoners in San Francisco ("the more prisons, the more the overcriminalization of our community"); and of her "personal revulsion" at seeing this black chairman of the Joint Chiefs—why, her mother had been at Colin Powell's wedding. In order to deal with this problem, she noted, "we have to develop a class analysis in a way that we didn't" in the sixties. (Why not just say that race is not a relevant consideration in discussing the war?) The numerous blacks in the military? "They have no alternative if they don't want to end up in prison," she said.

Students at Santa Cruz had told Angela Davis that in opposing the war they "felt disempowered." Here she paused to let the impressive-sounding phrase sink in with the Stanford students. "In our day," she went on, "we didn't even have that language. Couldn't express the concept!" The suggestion was that great progress has been made in surprising ways. So, she concluded, "you have to lead us."

So, said Arnold Beichman, my old interlocuter at the Hoover Institution, how come you are associated with people like that? Thoughts and beliefs, of course, need not be coupled predictably with other thoughts and beliefs. I agreed with some things that were said at the teach-in and disagreed with some things. Frequently heard was the conspiratorial claim that the military build-up and war were a *calculated* White House and Pentagon response to impending military budget cuts. After the session I participated in, a (medical) student came up to me and wondered what he would tell his kids, two or three decades from now, about how the war started. He added right away that we would probably know by then because at that point the relevant documents would surely be declassified.

I told him I thought this was not the right way to look at the question—secret minutes, classified documents, and so on. No doubt there will be new revelations about President Bush's inner thoughts, but they won't add a great deal to what we already know. Bush is already copiously on the record on the topic. He was, evidently, obsessed with Saddam Hussein, and regarded the attack on Kuwait by Iraq as unprecedented since 1945. ("There has been nothing like this since World War II," he told David Frost. "Nothing of this moral importance.")

In retrospect, Bush's policy resembled a classic "bait and switch" operation. First he used the presidential war-making powers to put in sanctions and a defensive force. Then he repudiated his own sanctions and switched to offense. Congressional authorization was narrowly given, but probably only because the vote was so close to the U.N. deadline that many congressmen recognized that anything else would lead to national humiliation at so late a date.

The war was also launched under the protective cover of "collective action" provided by the United Nations. The neoconservative columnist Charles Krauthammer pointed out a few weeks before the war began that the U.N. furnished a convenient "fig leaf" for what was essentially us against Iraq. This is correct, but we should be wary of getting into wars under false pretenses. And as I told the Stanford students, liberals should be more wary than they are of international organizations like the U.N., especially when they legitimize preemptive strikes on small countries because they might one day grow stronger. In its long-run consequences, smashing a small and distant country which did not and does not constitute a threat to our interests cannot be good for the United States. If America is to prevail in the world, we must do so by example, not by force. Perhaps Angela Davis and I agree on that point. I really don't mind. The truth or falsity of arguments is not determined by those who make them. □

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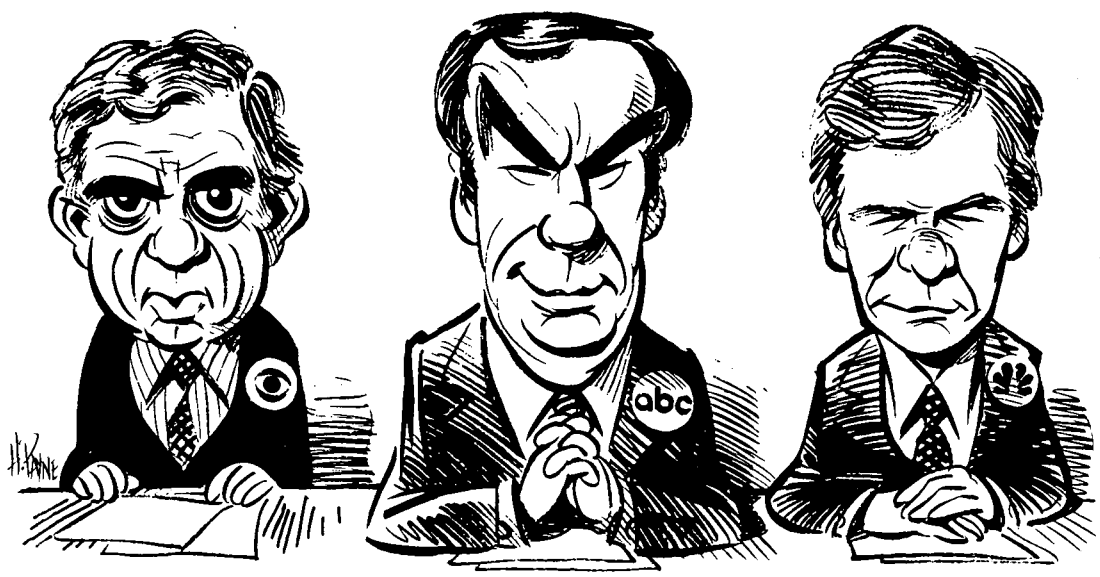

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Michael Ledeen

WE *ARE* NUMBER ONE

America's performance in the Gulf war charts the outlines of a one-superpower world. As misconceptions die in the Middle East, the Western alliance grows stronger. So should the desire of Arab nations to support it.

It is already obvious that the Gulf war is shattering many of the foolish myths of our time, most importantly that the United States is simply a country like any other. The first two nights of the war showed the awesome difference between a superpower and a regional power. No other country on earth could have mustered the force, the intelligence, and the coordination to launch such a relentless attack against Saddam Hussein's armies.

In retrospect, we can see that there has been a systematic effort to diminish the world-historical role of the United States. That our enemies would wish to falsify our stature and our might is understandable, but it is noteworthy that so many of our own intellectuals and politicians bought the party line. It is highly amusing that no one had any doubt about Israel's ability to smash Iraq (indeed, the violent denunciations of the Israeli destruction of Saddam Hussein's first effort at nuclear production in 1981 were of the sort that one reserves for a bully picking on the neighborhood weakling), but for months before the war started some of our "experts" were talking about tens of thousands of American casualties, as if we were not up to Israel's standard of military power. Yet Israeli radio now starts its broadcast day with the phrase "God bless America."

By the time the war is over, even our own broadcasters and journalists may realize that the might of the United States is quite unlike that of any other nation in the world. They should reflect on the fact that most of the rest of the world knew this all along; few governments doubted our power, but many questioned our resolve.

France, for example. The French went too far in their efforts to achieve an independent foreign policy in the Gulf crisis, and their obsequiousness to Iraq was disgusting. But, as in virtually every other crisis in the past, when the time came to fight, the French were there, were there in force, and fought in the toughest places. Their initial sorties were over Kuwait, where Iraqi armed forces had had five months to dig in against our air power. Mitterrand told his people on national television that the time had come to fight, and that French forces were under American command. The implications are staggering.

The point is not that the French are particularly heroic—nor would they consider themselves so—but that they were entitled to wonder if we were really going to fight at all. So their policy was a double-track one: if we were to fight, they would join (and they had fully integrated their armed forces under General Schwarzkopf's command long since); if we were going to cut a deal, they wanted to make sure that they got theirs.

It wasn't so very long ago—just about a decade, in fact—that the French thought they were fighting side by side with us in Lebanon, only to find that a few well-placed car bombs were sufficient to sap our will and drive us out. They urged a joint military response, in order that the anti-Western forces (Syria, Iraq, Iran, miscellaneous terrorists and other nuts) not draw the conclusion that "if you kill enough of the infidels they will turn and run." But the United States, headed by that tough cowboy, Ronald Reagan, turned and ran.

This explains French behavior in the Gulf, but it does not entirely justify it. The real ally, the true friend, has been, as usual, Great Britain. The Brits had the same concerns as the French—they too had seen American policy vacillate—but Mrs. Thatcher took quite a different approach. She got out in front of President Bush, and then dragged him all the way. There were moments when her Foreign Office told her she was being a fool—that the Americans weren't reliable, that Bush would cut a deal, that she would be all alone, just as she had been on the Europe question—but she made it a matter of principle. In the end, we all owe her a debt of gratitude, for this, as for so much else.

Mary McGrory made the hysterical claim in the *Washington Post* that the role of diplomacy is to avoid war. That's nonsense. The role of diplomacy is to advance national interests. Sometimes that *requires* war. And certain kinds of diplomatic initiatives can be best advanced against the background of war, or because of the fear of war.

Indeed, because of this war we may well be in the best position in decades to advance the cause of long-term peace in the Middle East, precisely because the war has destroyed several regional myths:

(1) *Israel as an aggressive power.* Israel's restraint after the first two days of Scud attacks impressed the other members of "the coalition," all of whom expected a quick and violent act of retaliation. In fact, after the second wave of Scuds, the *Washington Post* produced no less than six large headlines referring to the likelihood of Israeli retaliation, as if they were hoping it would happen so they could deplore it. But Israel waited. The lesson is that, in very important and complex

Michael Ledeen is resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.

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situations, it is very difficult to predict human decision-making. For once, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir may have been the right man for the job. His instinct is always to do nothing. And this time, his instinct was right.

(2) *The implacable hatred of all Arab countries for Israel.* To near-universal astonishment, the Arab members of the coalition (Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait-in-exile, and even Syria) all said that Israel had every right to defend herself, and that they would not split the anti-Saddam alliance simply because Israel exercised that right. Meanwhile, for weeks we had heard from half the world that, if Israel lifted a finger, the entire alliance would dissolve instantly, because of . . .

(3) *The "Arabs."* This stereotype—a racist one at that—seems to be used primarily to criticize American policy. The notion that the Saudis, the Egyptians, and the Kuwaitis would sabotage the war effort against their mortal enemy simply because Israel decided to respond to an attack by Iraq was to say, in effect, "These Arabs are so stupid they'll cut their own throats in order to call Israel names." There are substantial differences between these countries, and the American public is ill-served by such oversimplification. One of the dramatic developments in this war has been the change in the behavior of the Saudi leadership. This is a country—excuse me, a family—that had hitherto conducted its foreign policy on the principle of buying protection from its potential assassins, including Iraq and the PLO. With the hangman at the door, the Royal Family has suddenly shown some gumption, and much of the old rhetoric has gone. Prince Bandar, the ambassador to Washington, recruits the Jewish lobby to push for a hawkish American policy in the Gulf, for example. And Saudi pilots fly alongside us and the Brits against another Arab country. So the next time you hear someone talk about the "Arabs," please honk.

(4) *The "Palestinians."* There seems to be a death wish in the heart of the PLO, for it's hard to explain how any organization can be so consistently wrong as this one. And the Palestinians are in terrible trouble. First of all, having backed the wrong horse in Saddam, they have been thrown out of the Gulf countries. Secondly, the Palestinians who had been gainfully employed in Israel are redundant, because Israel, now inundated with Russian-speaking manpower, no longer needs Palestinians to sweep the streets and do the dirty work. Thirdly, there is a chance that the Saudis and the Egyptians will actually remember that the Palestinians sided with Saddam Hussein, and will accordingly take a somewhat jaundiced view of the merits of giving these people their own piece of the earth, complete with their own armed forces (the better to ally themselves with future Saddams). In stupidly backing the cause of Iraqi imperialism, the Palestinian leadership have shown themselves to be not moderate nationalists but extremists, and have undermined their claim to legitimacy.

There is hope that the Saudis and the Egyptians and the Kuwaitis (and the Omanis, who never get mentioned, because the Sultan is clever enough to wish to be ignored in the news coverage) will realize that there are advantages to being on the side of Israel and the United States. Could this finally be the moment when several Arab leaders figure out that a working alliance between their money and Israeli entrepreneurship, technology, and inventiveness would be a great thing for all of them?

The role of diplomacy is to advance national interests. Sometimes that *requires* war.

It is possible, if not likely, and I hope very much that Bush and Baker will give it a try. We are going to have enormous international leverage after this war, and we should exert it on behalf of our values—above all, democracy. One of the great lessons of the war is the irrelevance of the Soviet Union, exposing the embarrassing shortsightedness of hinging so much of our foreign policy on the personage of Mikhail Gorbachev. Surely President Bush will now read the riot act to the Soviets, who up to the last week were smuggling shiploads of materiel to the Iraqis—and who continue to provide aid. They took the opportunity of the Gulf crisis to crack down on the Baltics and other freedom-seeking republics. It's long past time to recognize the governments of the Baltics, and, for that matter, of the Russian Republic. We should encourage democrats like Yeltsin rather than those who still believe some sort of Communism can be salvaged at the point of a gun. Much of the Soviet empire will burn before this year is over, because no regime built on terror can pass quietly into history. As I predicted over a year ago, we are still only at the beginning of this story. As long as the KGB and other such institutions survive, one cannot confidently declare the death of the old order.

We need to support democracy not only in the old Soviet Empire, but also in the Middle East. Saddam Hussein was a standard-issue military dictator who went megalo. Like his predecessors, he came to believe that he was invulnerable. The democracies stood by until the eleventh hour, and, indeed, had he not done us the enormous favor of invading Kuwait, we would have waited until he developed his nuclear weapons before moving (*there*'s a movie for Michael Ovitz to think about), just as we waited for the Japanese in 1941. We must make it clear to the likes of President Assad of Syria that it is time to start sharing power with his people. And we must deliver the same sermon to the Saudis. Like the Shah of Iran before them, they are perfectly suited to play the role of constitutional monarchs, but America will not support dictators indefinitely, even if they sit on oil wells. Both countries want a durable friendship, and this will eventually require the liberalization of their polity.

Finally, the Reagan legacy now looks ever more sparkling. Everyone watching the amazing performance of American military technology must give thanks to the big Pentagon budgets of the Reagan years. As more than one terrified journalist in the Gulf pointed out during the fighting, it would certainly be nice to have Star Wars up and working the next time Americans have to go to war to protect our interests, and those of mankind. The other great Reagan policy—unfortunately junked by the Bush Administration—was controlling the flow of technology to our enemies. When this thing is over, we should mercilessly denounce the wretched Germans, who almost single-handedly gave Saddam his chemical capability (and then had the nerve to demonstrate in the hundreds of thousands against our intervention in the Gulf).

We are on the verge of fulfilling our destiny as the leader and the inspiration of the Second Democratic Revolution. Saddam Hussein has given this movement greater impetus, and given the United States greater authority and prestige. If Bush and Baker were not seized by the thrill of the moment before the Gulf war, they should be overwhelmed by it now. □

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David Frum

THE MOST OVERRATED BOOK OF THE YEAR

Bronx cheers to conservatives who've been heaping praise on Jim Sleeper's socialistic *The Closest of Strangers.*

"The cause of bad writing," H. L. Mencken once told a professor who'd been incautious enough to ask, "is, as often said, bad thinking. But what isn't said enough is that the cause of bad thinking is stupidity."

As usual, Mencken was not being entirely fair. For many people, writing is as treacherous as mounting an inflatable pool toy: just as they get one leg wrapped around the thing, it shoots out from underneath them. That's poor Jim Sleeper's problem. In *The Closest of Strangers*, his much-praised book about New York's racial troubles, he can never quite make his words do what he wants them to.[1] Every time he seems at last about to get a grip on them, they capsize him. He re-emerges, sentences later, blowing water out his nose, looking ridiculous.

New Yorkers, in Sleeperese, aren't cosmopolitan or tolerant; they are "marked so indelibly by the vigors and ironies of this difficult passage that one can never be quite comfortable in one's old tribe or parochial faith." Black nationalists are not separating themselves from the rest of America; they are "withdraw[ing] at least provisionally into communal and personal inner journeys in order to reclaim themselves and redefine their terms of entry." Churchgoing blacks who build their own houses are not merely decent citizens; they are, "though sometimes brusque and formulaic," "dialectical in a way ideologues with all the answers never can be."

What seems to prevent Sleeper from expressing himself straightforwardly is his nervous suspicion that his ideas will sound commonplace unless decorated with big dollops of verbal goo. He was too fearful. *The Closest of Strangers* has won the praise of people whose tastes don't usually agree. Its dustjacket carries a glowing blurb from neoconservative writer Diane Ravitch. Scott McConnell, an editorialist for the *New York Post*, commended the book in *Commentary*. *NY*, the Manhattan Institute's excellent new quarterly, has reprinted a chapter.

At the same time, Pulitzer Prize-winner J. Anthony Lukas, than whom nobody is more Politically Correct, received the book with wary applause in the *New York Times Book Review*. Wrapped around Ravitch's blurb are those of Shelby Steele, arch-liberal columnist Sydney Schanberg, and Randall Kennedy, the editor of the new black academic quarterly *Reconstruction*.

The thesis that has so pleased both right and left goes roughly as follows: White racism is not in fact entirely to blame for the poverty and degradation of black New York, and much of what gets condemned as white racism is in fact a normal reaction to behavior by underclass blacks that is intolerable by any standard. Therefore, middle-class New Yorkers of all colors must struggle together against the real threats to the city—uncontrolled corporate investment and disinvestment, real estate speculation, and insufficient federal funds.

Sleeper's conservative readers seem to have decided that an attack on black radicalism by a member of the *Newsday* editorial board who once wrote for the *Village Voice* and *Dissent* is such a stupendous event that it deserves all the encouragement it can get, even if the attack is scalped from twenty-year-old issues of the *Public Interest*. It's rather like the reaction of a Canadian friend of mine when told that a witticism attributed to a nineteenth-century politician in the *Oxford Book of Canadian Political Anecdotes* was, in fact, plagiarized from Charles James Fox: "Well, John A. MacDonald may not have been the first *person* to say it, but he was the first *Canadian* to say it."

But I fear that the conservative critics of Sleeper's book are miscalculating its likely effect—an effect that it is now more likely to have because of their too-hasty applause. Sleeper's analysis won't do much good, and his recommendations—which the municipal authorities are more likely to heed—could cause much harm.

What most fundamentally threatens the stability of New York's neighborhoods, Sleeper believes, is not crime, disorder, and taxes, but gentrification. Here's a little glimpse of Sleeperism, in an anecdote he tells of an Italian neighborhood on Carroll Street, on the edge of Brooklyn's Park Slope. Throughout the 1970s, the neighborhood had been threatened by criminals from a nearby slum tenement. Rising property values closed the tenement in 1981. That victory did little good, though, for "what [the tenement] hadn't managed to do, the yuppies were accomplishing":

> Anna Bruno had raised her kids in a rented apartment on the block and would look out at the world from a pillow propped on the sill of her ground-floor window, cursing the Puerto Rican kids on their go-carts. Then a renovator bought Anna's building and told her she'd have to move. . . .
>
> Anna had to move to Florida to live with her daughter. She was stoic about it until her last morning on the block, when the movers arrived; then the dam of her dignity burst, and she hobbled up and down the street, weeping on the necks of her friends. A few forlorn letters from Florida—"There's nothing to do here. I'm all alone"—and then, back in the old neighborhood for a visit at Christmas, she keeled over onto a friend's linoleum floor and died.

But why couldn't Mrs. Bruno have moved a couple of blocks away? Although visitors who spend their time touring the city's posh neighborhoods might find this hard to believe, New York is not a very crowded place. Every New York borough except Staten Island is home to fewer people today than it was in 1960. Brooklyn alone has lost 1.5 million residents over the past thirty years. To the north, south, and west of Mrs. Bruno's old house are huge, depopulated stretches of ground. Why couldn't she settle there? The answer, as anybody who lives in Brooklyn knows, is crime: her neighborhood was one of the very few areas in central Brooklyn where an old woman can walk around the block with some feeling of safety.

But that's not Sleeper's answer. Capitalism killed Mrs. Bruno. Capitalism tosses old ladies out of their homes; "capitalism . . . corrodes the fabric of community life." Because of capitalism, New York is in the grip of a ruthless real estate industry that unfeelingly shoves the old and infirm out of the way in order to make a buck:

> What causes all this churning, sometimes more brutal than benign? Most obvious is the city's ever-changing demography, people of wildly divergent lineage pouring in and out, seeking opportunity and freedom. They are responding, in turn, to ever-changing configurations of capital, technology, and culture—of the non-spatial networks I've mentioned. But a more intimate yet often invisible cause of neighborhood churning is a real-estate industry that is to New York City what big oil has been to Houston, a remarkable agglomeration of bankers, investors, developers, builders, owners, managers, and brokers who speculate frenetically on the sites of the great enterprises and headquarters and on the neighborhoods where their owners, managers, workers, clients, and customers might live.
>
> These key players in the real-estate game have a culture and sub-cultures all their own; they sluice the currents of neighborhood investment and disinvestment that are so swift and unsparing. As they try to profit from various communities' emergence, stabilization, upgrading or decline, they stamp the perceptions and preferences of New Yorkers, whose standing in the real-estate market is determined by income and tastes derivative of their relationships to the larger, nonspatial networks of the city.

The solution, Sleeper believes, is to control that arrogant "sluicing" in the interests of neighborhood preservation. Sleeper quotes New York's onetime pub-

[1] *The Closest of Strangers: Liberalism and the Politics of Race in New York*, by Jim Sleeper, W. W. Norton, $19.95.

David Frum is an assistant features editor at the Wall Street Journal.

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lic housing chief, Roger Starr, as worrying in 1959 about the city's "enemy"—its "internal forces of self-destruction." But Sleeper replies, "Perhaps the 'enemy's' lair really lay closer to home, in the hardheaded calculation of slum realtors and developers, calculations that could be upset only by galloping socialism or a full-employment economy." About the form that the solution should take, Sleeper is characteristically murky: he has nothing more specific to say than that there ought to be "some way for cities to influence or make claims upon new configurations of technology, investment, employment, consumption, demographics." You get the idea.

So does the present municipal administration. The Koch administration had many faults—very, very many—but it did at least understand that the business of American cities is business. Fifty years ago, New York's leading businesses were light manufacturing, shipbuilding and ship repair, entertainment, loading and unloading boats, and railroading. Today they are finance, advertising, publishing, entertainment, and design. New industries need new kinds of buildings, and attract new kinds of workers who need new kinds of homes. The Koch administration by and large permitted those new buildings and new homes to be built. Not everybody liked the change. The new high-rises on the Upper East Side blocked the views of the residents of Park Avenue. Office development choked the midtown streets with traffic. And the city's new residents showed a dismaying lack of respect for its traditional customs: yuppies who rented 1,000-square-foot boxes in the sky for $2,400 a month found it hard to understand why prominent critics of the "Greed Decade" were able to live in five rent-controlled bedrooms overlooking Central Park for half that sum.

As it happened, no action of Dinkins's was needed to stop the Koch real estate boom. Still, he and his supporters stand vigilant to prevent its return. It is this determination—and not any tendency in the mayor toward bravery in the face of the Sharptons and Daughtrys and Maddoxes of New York—that Sleeper's book will reinforce, if it has any impact on New York politics at all.

Sleeper is articulating a wish that is about all the politics that New York's white left still has: the wish to turn New York into a brownstone Venice, where communities go on living where they always have, as they always have, protected from the chaotic impact of change.

I remember once reading about the daughter of a rich New Yorker of the early nineteenth century. She had been born in 1837 in a house near Battery Park. Four years later, the family moved to Fourth Street, near Washington Square, and soon afterward, to Greenwich Street in what's now called Tribeca. But "the neighborhood changed rapidly and most of our friends . . . the Grahams, Townsends, deForests, Berghs, Kips, Kerries, LeRoys, Wilmerdings, Whitneys, and others of the old New York families . . . moved away. We remained here until we were surrounded by immigrant boarding houses, and then went uptown to live." All this by the age of 16.

If this unceasing motion is to stop—if new yuppie migrants are to cease displacing old Italian migrants—so too must the commercial and industrial

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR *DAILY NEWS.*

Unlike almost everyone I know in New York, I am a loyal fan of the *Daily News*, New York's largest tabloid. Like all great art, it offers a simple reflection of the world. I read the *New York Times*, I know what's going on in Islamabad. I read the *Daily News*, I know what's going on outside my doorstep. And now the *News* is on strike—not just any strike, but one of those passion plays in which New Yorkers routinely destroy their best institutions. If you think living in New York is tough, try doing it without the *Daily News*.

To the New Yorker, there are only three points on the moral compass: (1) the Vietnam War, (2) the civil rights movement, and (3) the good old days of the 1930s, when, as one veteran recently put it, "you could smell revolution on the streets of New York."

Just the other night, for example, I passed a candlelight vigil of people protesting our involvement in the Middle East. Fair enough. But were they holding up signs saying "Hands Off Saddam" or "Kuwait Is Not Worth American Lives"? No, they were singing old civil rights songs. A middle-class New Yorker can't even go out and express his opinion without pretending to be someone else.

Because each new event fits so casually into the coordinates, the *Daily News* strike has been easy to pigeonhole. It is, of course, a conflict between "the bosses" and "the workers." Never mind that the striking Teamster drivers make up to $100,000 a year, often without even working a full week. Never mind that the paper is so hamstrung with work rules that bundles must often be tied by one union, untied, and then retied by another. Never mind that its parent company, the *Chicago Tribune*, has lost $110 million in the last ten years and announced on January 17 that it will close down if it can't find a buyer.

We are New Yorkers, brave and true, supporters of every social welfare program known to mankind. Because our hearts are in the right place, somebody must come in and subsidize us for all the extravagances we create. Thus, writing in the *New York Times*, James Wieghart, who served as editor of the *News* from 1982 to 1984, concluded that the only solution was for somebody in New York—"with deep pockets"—to buy the paper and subsidize it.

Only a few weeks later, the *Times* opened up another series of editorials called "America's Duty to New York," in which it attributes New York's troubles to "massive Federal unfairness" and whines that "the rest of the country refuses to pay its fair share."

The *News* strike was not two weeks old when striking workers and their supporters were addressed at a street rally in front of the *News*'s 42nd Street building by the leading representatives of church and state, Governor Mario Cuomo and John Cardinal O'Connor. By the time the rally was held, the unions had already torched several delivery trucks. They have since burned down a half-dozen stores.

For the governor, this was an easy one. "You are striking for all of us," he told the union throng. Never mind that, at the very moment he spoke, upstate prison workers were protesting in the streets over Governor Cuomo's own efforts to fire people in order to salvage the mess he has made of the state budget (deficit $4 billion and counting). Cardinal O'Connor's presence was more interesting. The Cardinal is quite upset because the *News* has hired unemployed and homeless people to hawk the paper on the streets. To the Cardinal, this constituted "exploitation of the homeless" and "unfair labor practice."

Which raises an interesting point. As the *News* itself has repeatedly noted, the unions have become utterly unrepresentative of the population of New York. They are father-and-son unions, 99 percent white and mostly made up of people who have long since moved to the suburbs. Although the *News* has far exceeded the *Times* and the *Post* in putting blacks on the editorial staff (Bob Herbert and Earl Caldwell, New York's only black columnists, have both refused to strike at the *News*), union policies have forced it to go on hiring the sons and nephews and cousins and grandsons of the people who worked for it forty years ago.

The men who are hawking the *News* on the streets and subways today are virtually all black. In fact, it is the first time I have ever seen black men monopolize any sort of occupational "concession" in New York. The other day I chatted with the man who sells the *News* at the 14th Street subway stop. He is a literate middle-aged man who makes $40 a day selling the *News* and works evenings doing research for a lawyer uptown. I asked him if he had ever applied for a job at the *News* before the strike. "No," he said, "they've got a very powerful union up there and it's very rough to get in. Many apply, but few are chosen."

Of course, none of this makes any difference to liberal New Yorkers, always living in the past. As I approached my hawker on the subway platform the other day, a little old lady in front of me was buying the paper. When I stepped up to buy mine, a tall, skinny Greenwich Village–type kid with wire-rim glasses pushed between us and shouted, "The *Daily News* is on strike!" I bought my paper, and glanced up the stairs, only to see him shoving the little old lady into a wall. I couldn't get through the crowds to catch up with him, but I promise, if I see him again I'm going to loosen one of his teeth.

The thought of living in New York without the *News* scares me to death. It is, quite simply, "The Voice of the People"—at least, of the people I want to know. The letters to the editor in the *News* are pure gold. "In America you can choose your own destiny." "Why do subway clerks sit there counting change while fifteen people are waiting on line to buy tokens?" "Thanks to the people in the local fire house for bringing my kids Christmas presents."

The people who write for, and read, the *Times*, on the other hand, make your skin crawl. Over the past three years, the *Times* has printed two op-ed page submissions in which readers *apologized* for being mugged. Both said they understood their attackers' feelings perfectly, felt sorry for them, and only wished they could have done more to help.

Would you want to wake up every morning with the thought of having to share breakfast with these people? —*William Tucker*

(Mr. Tucker, TAS*'s New York correspondent, is a writer for* Forbes.)

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change that causes it. Sleeper admits only to hoping to slow it down. But however finely one were to calibrate it, a slowdown would at the very least kill the "full employment economy" that is the only alternative that Sleeper offers us to slums or "galloping socialism."

Sleeper appears to understand this danger, and has an idea of how to avert it. Some entity other than the private economy must step forward and pump money into the city to employ its people in ways that do not wreck New York's neighborhoods as they exist precisely now, in late winter 1991. And, naturally, that entity is the federal government, which stupidly "doesn't know enough to lavish on New York's great heart a tenth of what the French spend on Paris or Italians on Rome." Not all the money is to come from Washington: some must come from New York's middle class, for, as Sleeper sternly warns, the pathologies of New York's poor do not excuse their "angry victims from supporting social investments in prenatal care, early education, and jobs. Quite the contrary . . . "

Quite the contrary. New York must have more of everything that has brought it to its present trouble—more rent control, more "social investment," more interference with business, more public housing, more taxes, more federal aid, more welfare, more of everything that has so miserably failed over the past thirty years. This, I'm sorry to report, is what passes for bold, innovative, and courageous thinking in what was once the intellectual capital of America. □

George Szamuely

GERMANY NEITHER EAST NOR WEST

Reunification has left the Germans crabby, cowardly, and conveniently anti-Communist.

Berlin

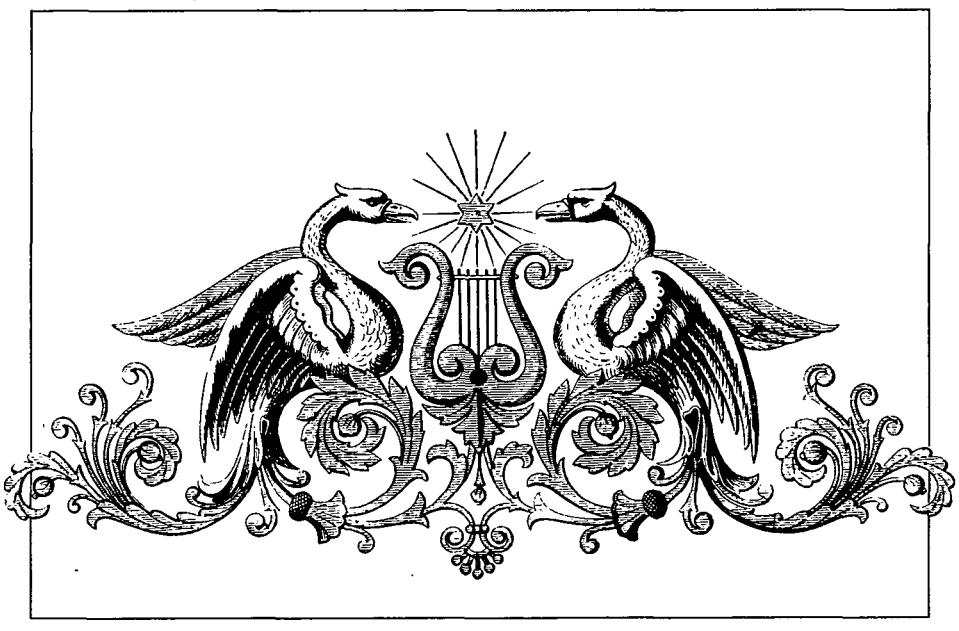
Since last summer, the world media have been speculating feverishly on the subject of Germany. Is Germany the coming superpower? Will Europe once more fall under its sway? Is Germany the economic motor that will set the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe moving?

To most Germans, however, the reunification of last October 3 is a source, if not exactly of pride, then of relief. First of all, their country will be like any other, without minefields, barbed wire, and armed guards in the middle of it. Secondly, the dreadful Honecker regime has gone, and by 1994 there should be no more Soviet troops stationed on German territory. A great nation's period in purgatory is over.

Whether the new Germany will look west or east is anybody's guess. German capitalists are no more eager than their American or British counterparts to make bad investments. Is the return on investment higher in Warsaw than in Düsseldorf? Labor is cheaper but the infrastructure inferior; environmental controls are less onerous but management less competent. It is difficult to know ahead of time how the sums will work out—especially when no one knows how much will be left over when the costs of unification have been added up.

But it is far from obvious that the addition of 17 million countrymen and an industrial base of questionable value will turn Germany into a superpower. In 1989, West Germany (the FRG) had a GNP of $1,210 billion, compared to $5,199 billion for the United States and $2,874 billion for Japan. East Germany (the GDR) had a GNP between $102 and $196 billion. Even at the higher estimate, a united Germany would have a GNP of $1,406 billion—less than a third that of the U.S., and half that of Japan. Together, France ($958 billion) and the United Kingdom ($839 billion) have an economy 36 percent larger than that of the new Germany.

The FRG has been the world's largest exporter, with $324 billion in exports in 1988, compared to Japan's $265 billion. Exports account for 26 percent of the GNP in West Germany, compared to 5 percent in the U.S. This is an extraordinary performance, and accounts for the perpetually strong Deutschmark, but it is also a source of vulnerability: German economic growth depends heavily on the performance of other countries. Needless to say, not all of Eastern Europe is a secure market for German manufactured goods. In 1988, exports to the Soviet bloc accounted for only 5 percent of the West German total, because German exports—telecommunications, robots, scientific equipment—presuppose a certain economic and industrial sophistication on the part of the importing country. With the members of Comecon now trading in hard currency at world prices, and with future oil prices uncertain, it's unlikely that East European countries will be able to import much from Germany. The Soviet Union, which exports 3-4 million barrels of oil a day, is a different story. It will probably be able to import high-tech goods from Germany. But this hardly proves Germany will dominate the Soviet Union.



In Stavropol last July, Helmut Kohl—head of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and now chancellor of the entire nation—pledged that a united Germany would have armed forces of no more than 370,000 men. (France has 460,000 men in its armed forces, Britain 306,000; both, of course, are nuclear powers.) According to its constitution, Germany may not have nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons, or station troops outside NATO areas. While it is possible the Germans will tear up their constitution, break their pledge to Gorbachev, and develop a nuclear capability, no one who has traveled around Germany recently can think it likely. Their negligible contribution to the Western effort in the Persian Gulf reached a fatuous conclusion just prior to the January 15 deadline when foreign minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher proposed that the West offer Iraq a pledge to secure a democratic form of government for Kuwait. Today—and for the foreseeable future—the Germans are preoccupied with one thing only: how to unify two states that ran on political systems whose fundamental incompatibility formed the dividing line of the modern world.

What will become of the factories producing goods no one wants to buy? What happens to the former members, informers, and files of the Stasi, East Germany's ruthless secret police? How are the two armies to be integrated? Should the former East German leaders be prosecuted? There has to be some sort of reckoning with

George Szamuely is a writer living in New York City.

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the past—not just that of the East, but that of the West as well. In fact, a reckoning is already taking place.

"Until a year ago, neither conservatives nor liberals nor social democrats did very much for the unification of Germany," says Detlef Kühn, president of a West German think-tank that used to specialize in studying the institutions of East Germany. His observation is not as astonishing as it might sound; even during the twelve months leading up to reunification, not all Germans were doing very much to advance it. When Kohl put forward his ten-point plan to reunite the nation shortly after the opening of the Berlin Wall, he envisaged a fifteen-year process, but even this not particularly daring program elicited widespread protest in West Germany. In February 1990, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* reported that West Berlin mayor Walter Momper favored not reunification but a "democratization" of East Germany that would allow it to retain its *Eigenstaatlichkeit*, or individual character. Oskar Lafontaine, the candidate of the Social Democratic party (SPD) in the October 1990 elections for chancellor, spent most of last year urging a halt to the unification process, then its slowing down, and when this led nowhere he ended up complaining about how much it was all going to cost.

Although the SPD was resoundingly defeated, now as before the influence of the left in Germany far exceeds its mediocre showing at the polls. A visitor to Germany will be struck by the frequency of the complaints about unification. Taxi drivers in West Berlin say East German drivers are taking their customers away, while they are unable to reciprocate because their new compatriots cannot afford the exorbitant fares of the new German capital. People will tell you how small-minded the Saxons are and how officious the Prussians. The East Germans are lazy and unable to do anything until someone issues them a command. They want unification only because they think it will enable them to acquire BMWs and Mercedes without working for them. They are entitled to all of the extremely generous welfare benefits of the traditionally paternalistic West German state without having contributed a pfennig to the public kitty. Some people fear unemployment; some resent the amount of tax revenue that will be diverted eastward. Some will tell you that East and West Germany had acquired different national characteristics over the last forty years, and that the two should not have been united until the citizens of each state got better acquainted with one another. Older people, though of course happy at reunification, claim to take even greater pleasure at seeing young people greet the long-awaited event with barely stifled yawns. "The younger generation is more in favor of Europe," says a delighted Hans-Joachim Veen, director of research at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Bonn. "Patriotism is no longer an appropriate value. The Germans have overcome this stage. [Reunification] is 90 percent a good development, but it is no reason to go back to nationalism. Most Germans feel primarily European."

To Germans, the proverbial glass is always half-empty, and today, with the eyes of the world on them, they are likely to go out of their way to sound as unexultant as possible. What is shocking is the almost complete absence of joy that their compatriots from the East will never—one hopes—have to live under the likes of Ulbricht and Honecker again. Where is the much-vaunted German idealism that, one assumes, would urge the rapid dissemination of all the benefits the fat and prosperous West Germans have enjoyed for years? The petulance over the enormous financial burdens that are about to be imposed on the West stands in contrast to the daily agonizing—right across the political spectrum—about the need to do something to alleviate the plight of the Third World.

This is not to deny that the cost of rectifying forty years of Communist mismanagement will be staggering. Every day the estimates rise. Will it be DM100 billion? DM300 billion? DM500 billion? Or more? None of the figures sounds implausible. Roads and railways must be renovated, nuclear power plants made safe, rivers cleaned up, buildings made to conform to West German safety standards, artworks assessed after years of damage and neglect. With each additional Deutschmark, Oskar Lafontaine exulted. Had he not said all along that unification would prove very costly? Was he not right to be unenthusiastic? Emulating the stance that Walter Mondale adopted with such spectacular success in 1984, Lafontaine last year promised to raise taxes in the unlikely event of his winning. Like Mondale before him, he proclaimed that his victorious opponent would do the same thing, even if he refused to admit it. Reagan did not raise taxes in his second term; Kohl may in his third (he has waffled needlessly on the issue). Lafontaine may well be right on the need to raise taxes. But it was extraordinary that the candidate of the Social Democrats, who since 1945 had prided themselves on being more aggressive than the Christian Democrats in seeking to overcome the artificial division of Germany, should consider higher taxes an argument against unification. Not once did he declare that some things are worth paying for.

"There is a lot of uneasiness among West Germans, particularly of the younger generation, about being pulled out of their cozy Federal Republic into something new and different," says Christoph Bertram, an editor of the weekly *Die Zeit*. "Oskar Lafontaine was articulating something that the generation that has grown up in West Germany is feeling. It has not been a bad place to grow up. For them to go into an uncertain future is not something that comes easily. Many would be delighted to see democracy come to East Germany. But why should East Germany come to West Germany?"

Lafontaine was certainly articulating something, but it is hard to believe that a mere forty years—thirty, if you count back only to the building of the Berlin Wall—would be long enough to produce two genuinely separate states. The truth is that, after a lot of grumbling, most Germans accepted partition as a fact of life. The Hallstein Doctrine (according to which West Germany would break diplomatic relations with any state that recognized East Germany) was abandoned; *de facto* recognition was eventually granted to East Germany; the leaders of the two Germanys paid state visits to one another; West Germany poured billions of marks into the East German economy; Honecker received his annual financial tribute for dumping on his neighbor anyone to whom he no longer wished to extend his beneficent rule. It seemed as if it would go on forever.

What happened last year was not the way reunification was supposed to have come about.

Though, in public at least, reunification was abandoned, it remained the unstated premise of the liberal intelligentsia's *Ostpolitik*. (Helmut Kohl and the Christian Democrats, who came to power in 1982, did not really count, for they were seen largely as "useful idiots," unable seriously to change a policy developed by much cleverer men like Willy Brandt, Egon Bahr, and Herbert Wehner.) This is the source of the distinct lack of enthusiasm displayed by Lafontaine and the Social Democrats. What happened last year was not the way reunification was supposed to have come about.

Progressives had, until recently, regarded as the *sine qua non* of future humanity something called the "Third Way" (between capitalism and socialism, that is). To be sure, this was never going to be the East Germany of Ulbricht and Honecker. But a socialist confederation of Germany just might be. West Germany would adopt the collectivist institutions of the East, East Germany the democratic processes of the West. And while the two countries would retain their separate statehoods, Germany would become the leading exemplar of socialism in the world, just as Marx had envisaged. The Adenauer policy—binding West Germany economically and politically to the West and militarily to NATO—had been tried and found wanting. "There will be no reunification. The two German states and the partition of Europe will be there forever unless some kind of socialism overcomes it," is how Enno von Loewenstern, editorial-page editor of *Die Welt*, characterizes what used to be the SPD's hidden agenda. "The SPD has always taken the position that socialism went wrong in the Soviet Union . . . but if we do it, we will show the world that socialism with a human face is possible. In the meantime, the East German socialists insisted that the Russians were hanging by their tails from trees and that they were the only ones who had a viable socialism going."

De facto acceptance of East Germany came with Willy Brandt and *Ostpolitik*, setting in motion a process that would lead, many Social Democrats thought, step by step to full recognition of East German statehood and citizenship. The Erfassungsstelle Salzgitter, the West German agency that collected data on murders committed by the East German regime, would have to be abolished. In fact, West German states (*Länder*) under SPD control had contributed nothing to the agency's existence for years. The June 17 national holiday commemorating the 1953 Berlin uprising would also have to go. In August 1987, the Social Democrats and the ruling East German Communists issued a position paper proclaiming common roots in the European humanistic tradition and pledging both parties to continue to extend "democracy and human rights."

Kant and Hegel had taught the Germans that there was no being that was not already a consciousness of being. Therefore, if the two Germanys were to come together, West Germans would have to change their "consciousness" of East Germany, whether the facts warranted it or not. For many, recalling all this today is embarrassing. "We as journalists have to ask ourselves, what did we write about the GDR during the last twenty years?" asks Hans Hoyng, deputy foreign editor of *Der Spiegel*. "Even in my magazine . . . you

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could read that the situation of women, of education, of child and health care was better in East Germany. . . . After the collapse of their system, one has to wonder whether what we wrote was okay." One does indeed.

German unification on the basis of capitalism, democracy, and NATO membership came as a shock to the German left. Günter Grass, for one, reacted with fury: "The new instrument of torture will be the market economy. If you don't toe the line, you won't get anything," he said in a speech now reprinted in his book, *Two States—One Nation?* As if the prospect of a free market were not sufficiently chilling, there is always Auschwitz, which "makes a future unified German state impossible. And if such a state is nevertheless insisted upon, it will be doomed to failure." Grass's essential frivolity has by now consigned him to the margins of the debate. A more typical response has been to adjust one's position rapidly. Yet, just as most of the glowing accounts of life in East Germany came not from willful ignorance but from cold political calculation, so today the frequently expressed astonishment at the reality of life under Communism is not without deviousness.

East Germany, clearly one of the great losers of history, now receives nothing but insults. Liberals will inform you that the much-lauded day-care system was a manifestation of an impoverished society in which married women had no choice but to work to make ends meet. Isn't West Germany better, where only half of married women work? And how good could the education system have been, people ask sarcastically, if it indoctrinated its students with Marxist-Leninist dogma? Ah, but surely East Germany had (and will have until the end of this year) laxer abortion laws? True, but at least West German women could travel to the Netherlands and make use of the abortion clinics there, and not have to risk being butchered by inferior doctors. East Germany, the visitor will be staggered to discover, destroyed its environment, persecuted homosexuals and ethnic minorities, and ran a secret police more intrusive than anything the detested West succeeded in instituting.

"We have never been an anti-Communist magazine," says Hoyng, "but the ease with which we now use terms like 'Stalinist,' 'old-guard Stalinist,' and 'hard-line Stalinist' worries me a bit. You would not have read, 'Honecker, the Stalinist' two years ago, neither in *Stern*, nor in *Der Spiegel*, nor in much of the general press." Though it is never too late to learn, there is something unseemly in the eagerness with which people now articulate positions that a few months ago they would have labeled "fascist" or "antediluvian."

Last summer's "Christa Wolf controversy" showed German liberals at their bandwagon-hopping worst. Wolf, an East German novelist, was a self-proclaimed socialist and a member of the SED who had built up a following of sorts in the West. Like fellow writers Stefan Heym and Heiner Müller, she served as an advertisement for a Germany more cultured—and, shall we say, more German?—than the Americanized Federal Republic. Just after the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, a group of East German writers published a statement "Für Unser Land," rejecting reunification and expressing commitment to the "humane values" of an East Germany shorn of its Stalinist trimmings. In the months that followed, as their compatriots demonstrated their eagerness to be rid of those "humane values," the reputation of Christa Wolf and her colleagues began to sink. In early 1990 she published *Was bleibt* (What Remains), a novel she claimed to have written in 1979 but kept hidden in her drawer, fearing reprisals from the regime. The story concerned a young woman who had fallen afoul of the Stasi, and whose every subsequent movement was closely observed. The author claimed it was largely autobiographical; therefore, far from being a tool of the Honecker regime, as her detractors had painted her, she was its critic all along, and even its victim. Günter Grass, needless to say, advanced this interpretation. But the fury with which her erstwhile liberal admirers turned on her came as a profound shock. "To some extent she was a victim of the system, but to some extent even Goebbels was a victim of the system," says Detlef Kühn. She was criticized for her lack of daring in comparison with, say, Vaclav Havel. Her privileged status in East Germany was contrasted with that of a poet like Wolf Bierman, who never followed the party line and was eventually booted out of the country for his troubles. These attacks came in the stolid pages of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*.

"We as journalists have to ask ourselves, what did we write about the GDR during the last twenty years?" asks Hans Hoyng of *Der Spiegel*.

Germans have got used to making radical readjustments. Just as it suddenly emerged after World War II that there was nobody around who had not been involved in the anti-Nazi resistance and who did not oppose Hitler from the start, so today people boast that they were anti-Communist from the day the Cold War broke out. That West Germans from left to right were falling over themselves to curry favor with Honecker when he made his triumphal state visit in 1987 is already ancient history.

There is more to this than the human impulse to be on the winning side. The reunification of Germany may yet go disastrously, and, if it does, Kohl and the Christian Democrats will be blamed for it. The nightmarish accounts of life in East Germany belie the chancellor's optimism. In the event of catastrophe, critics will be quick to point out that they had said all along that the pace of unification should have been more measured; that, in their eagerness to swallow East Germany in one gulp, the Christian Democrats had failed to appreciate that the country was absorbing lethal doses of poison.

This unease involves more than the relatively simple matter of tax increases or higher interest rates to check the inflationary pressures arising from the costs of reunification. Critics are already questioning the character of the 17 million new citizens. From top to bottom, it is suggested, East Germany was staffed by toadies, *apparatchiki*, and informers. Where are the East German Havels and Walesas and Sakharovs? Two million East Germans belonged to the Communist party; millions more belonged to front organizations for the young, the trade unions, and other social groups. The best kept a low profile. The worst belonged to the Stasi. This organization kept files on 6 million Germans, including 2 million in the West. Most of the rest spied on their neighbors. An enterprise of such magnitude must have had a fantastic network of informers.

The SPD, once the party of reunification, boasting of its special relationship with the East German Communists, now vents its fury at the appallingly low moral caliber of the citizens of East Germany. The anti-Communist Christian Democrats, on the other hand, want to let bygones be bygones. There were surely some bad characters at the top of the Communist police state, they argue, but most people were just going about their daily business. Those who served Communist masters out of fear or opportunism will now gladly serve their new rulers. The debate is painfully reminiscent of the one conducted in postwar West Germany. The Christian Democrats won out then, as they almost certainly will do again. It is not that the Social Democrats are not raising important issues: an overeagerness to forgive and forget creates problems, as Germans of an older generation found when their offspring turned on them in the 1960s.

But the SPD is hardly well positioned to bring up East Germany's crimes. Its leaders like to contrast the Social Democrats and the Christian Democrats of *East* Germany. The former party, with its origins in the churches, was created after the wall came down; the latter served for years as one of the *Blockparteien* that maintained putative independence but supported the regime on every issue. According to Erhard Eppler, one of the movers behind the West German Social Democrats' joint declaration with the East German Communists in 1987, it's no wonder Kohl's Christian Democrats are pushing for a wide-ranging amnesty, "because in the East CDU, which is now part of the [greater] CDU . . . there are thousands of Stasi members and Stasi collaborators."

Eppler has a point. There are still Communist collaborators in place at the local level. Even Kohl was wary of dealing with the East German Christian Democrats at first, preferring the Demokratischer Aufbruch, which, like the Neues Forum, Bundnis 90, and other parties that emerged in the autumn of 1989, quickly faded into insignificance. Yet embarrassments continue. Lothar de Maizière, East Germany's first non-Communist prime minister, who went on to become deputy leader of the all-German CDU and minister without portfolio in the Kohl government, has had to resign amid allegations that he was a Stasi informer. Lafontaine, Eppler, and Hans-Joachim Vogel mumble words to the effect that "we do not need the grace of a short memory," but they are no keener than

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the Christian Democrats to investigate East Germany's past, especially after having seen the East German Social Democrats, newly established and seemingly on the way to electoral triumph, become a magnet to every kind of opportunist. Last December, one of the founders of the East German Social Democrats, Ibrahim Böhme, was forced to resign after being accused of spying on East German writers for the Stasi. Moreover, the East German SPD had to call itself the SDP for the first two months of its existence because the West German SPD, believing a Communist-run East Germany still viable, wanted the name to maintain its entree with the East German rulers. Even the SPD's leadership admits today that the party lost in the Volkskammer elections of March 1990 not because they were on a plane too lofty for the electorate, but because they failed to embrace reunification with sufficient enthusiasm. And, for ideological reasons, they couldn't do that.

However crude and opportunistic the SPD's argument, East Germany's past casts a giant shadow over the new Germany's future. First of all, will the 6 million citizens on whom the Stasi kept files be allowed access to them? Will informers then be liable to prosecution? "The issue of what people have done in these past forty years will not go away," explains Christoph Bertram, "because these files are still around; the memories are there. People knew who was informing on them. They will want to see their dossiers in order to clear themselves." But what has happened to the files? From the fall of the Berlin Wall until the October 3 elections, they were in the safekeeping of the East German ministry of interior. Tens of thousands of files have been removed, shipped to the Soviet Union, tampered with, falsified. One East German interior minister, Peter-Michael Diestel, was forced to resign for hiring members of the Stasi to conduct the de-Stasification. Stasi operatives may have had their records erased; people who never worked for the Stasi may suddenly have acquired records indicating that they did.

But there are serious crimes that cannot be swept under the rug. The most obvious were the most spectacular: the shooting of people trying to escape to the West. Everyone agrees that at least the perpetrators of these murders should be put on trial. But under what law would they be prosecuted? The guards who did the shooting will doubtless claim that they were only following orders. Whose orders? Obviously those of Erich Honecker and Erich Mielke, minister for state security. But was this pair acting in violation of East German law? Obviously they were acting in violation of West German law. But is it fair to pretend that for forty years the laws of the Federal Republic also applied to the citizens of the GDR? There would then be enough trials to last the lifetime of anyone who was around on October 3. On the other hand, Honecker, Mielke, the Stasi, the spy chief Markus Wolf and his successor Werner Grossman, the traitors Hansjoachim Tidge and Klaus Kuron, who worked for West German counterintelligence—surely, they can be put on trial?

Despite all the talk of prosecuting Honecker, nothing much has happened to him. Shortly after the opening of the wall, he was arrested and then released. Late last year, a new warrant was issued for his arrest, but could not be served since he was residing at a Soviet military base. "In Germany it is not within the competence of the Federal Ministry of Justice to decide whether proceedings should be initiated against Mr. Honecker and his colleagues," says Stephan Wanner, the ministry's press spokesman. "The administration of justice falls within the responsibility of the *Länder* ministries of justice." But there is a problem here: while the top men in East Germany have been removed, many bureaucrats remain in place. A prosecutor who had been particularly zealous in enforcing Communist law might fight his suggested removal by threatening to expose his colleagues. Even those who have emerged in free elections will declare that informing was a way of life in East Germany, that if you did not cooperate you would lose your apartment, your job, your child's place in the university. And how far should the prosecutions go? Although these issues are under discussion in other formerly Communist regimes, there are differences. For one, the murder of Germans exercising their right to travel cannot simply be ignored. Second, the regime went to a lot of trouble to infiltrate and sabotage the institutions of West Germany.

The SPD, once the party of reunification, boasting of its special relationship with the East German Communists, now vents its fury at the appallingly low moral caliber of the citizens of East Germany.

So far the record of the German government in defending its constitutional prerogatives has been unimpressive. On October 3, spymaster Werner Grossman was arrested on a warrant issued some time earlier, but was released the next day. To this day, no charges have been leveled against him. His predecessor Markus Wolf, meanwhile, had disappeared and was apparently living in Moscow, though the German government claims it does not know his whereabouts. It seems questionable that much of a case exists against either man. No one in the Federal Prosecutor's Office in Karlsruhe has seen the East German documents, and its staff boasts of its scrupulous regard for civil liberties in refusing to look at them. No attempt has been made to extradite Wolf, it is explained, because any trial would be political in nature; hence, the Russians are bound to say no. Yet a sanctimonious consensus prevails. The publishers of Wolf's memoirs, Bertelsmann, canceled the book upon the issuance of a warrant for his arrest on the grounds that Wolf had led them to believe he would not be prosecuted.

At the urging of justice minister Hans Engelhard, Helmut Kohl put forward a proposal to amnesty minor spies from the two Germanys. It was rejected by the Bundestag. The idea was to ensure that the tens of thousands of East German spies stationed in West Germany would seize the opportunity to come forward, rather than go to work for new masters, chiefly the KGB. Although the justice ministry let it be known that spies who turned themselves in could expect lenient treatment, very few have chosen to take up the offer. Even if they were to, it doesn't seem the West German authorities would be all that interested in whether what they had to say was information or disinformation. As far as they are concerned, the past is another country.

Yet the evidence is to the contrary. West German counterintelligence sources believe that KGB espionage is on the rise. Soviet commercial espionage is made easier by the continued presence of 380,000 Soviet troops on German soil. Another risk to German security comes from the amalgamation of the two armies, in which the West German Bundeswehr has absorbed 50,000 soldiers from the East German Volksarmee. Officers with the rank of colonel and above are not being taken, and there is a "security" test. Peter Frisch, vice president of the Federal Office of the Protection of the Constitution, says: "No doubt there is a risk, but we trust that many members of the Volksarmee had doubts about the regime they were serving. And for this reason they will serve the new Germany." But there are serious dangers to the assumption that everyone except Honecker, Mielke, and one or two sadists within the Stasi was simply an opportunist, an assumption that Egon Bahr takes to its most bizarre conclusion: "Members of the Volksarmee are proud to have gained more freedom of thought and behavior *vis-à-vis* the Soviet Union than their comrades from the Bundeswehr *vis-à-vis* the United States. I am full of respect for the officers who tell me they cannot forget their lives of the last thirty years, that they do not want to serve in the Bundeswehr, that they will leave the army. It is those, especially, that I would like to integrate into the forces." Alfred Dregger, leader of the CDU-CSU faction in the Bundestag, assured me that he would rather integrate the Volksarmee into the Bundeswehr than have them engaging in terrorism. Then why not hire former members of the Stasi to work for the Federal Republic's intelligence services?

National security notwithstanding, a glaring problem with this forgiving attitude toward former Communists is its lack of fairness. The Communists, it is alleged, were the most talented, the most skillful, the best educated people in East Germany. They occupied leading positions in society, and consequently their expertise and knowledge of local issues will be needed for the development of the five newly reconstituted *Länder*. As for their victims, the industrial workers, who is going to spare them? Their factories are already being closed down. Unemployment is at 10 percent and rising. When workers are sacked from their jobs no one cries "Annexation!" as they do when the Federal government tries to get rid of GDR judges still sitting on the bench or party hacks still teaching in the universities.

"The past must not be allowed to rule the future," Rita Süssmuth, the Christian Democrat speaker of the Bundestag, declared recently. To a certain extent, she is right. After all, if it is fair to say that the East Germans could have behaved more bravely and more honorably, so could have the West Germans. They could at least have avoided the cash-for-prisoners deals that they conducted under *Ostpolitik*. Germans west and east assumed that Honecker and the Stasi would be there forever. Yet letting bygones be bygones, particularly when they involve something as barbaric as the Berlin Wall, will inevitably raise questions as to the seriousness of the German commitment to all the wonderful things they pledged themselves to on October 3, 1990. □

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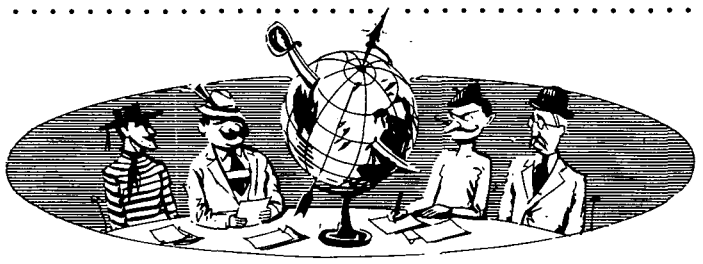


A FEW RIGHT MOVES

by Maurice Cranston

Prime Minister Bob Hawke's Labor government is busy burying socialism. The last party conference accepted his proposal to sell off the airlines, the telecommunications systems, some pipelines, and several smaller industries. Labor members of parliament, except for a few left-wingers, are pressing for even more privatization. For years, Australians put up with the inefficiency of their socialized industries, and it took the repudiation of state ownership in Eastern Europe to convince them to get rid of their own.

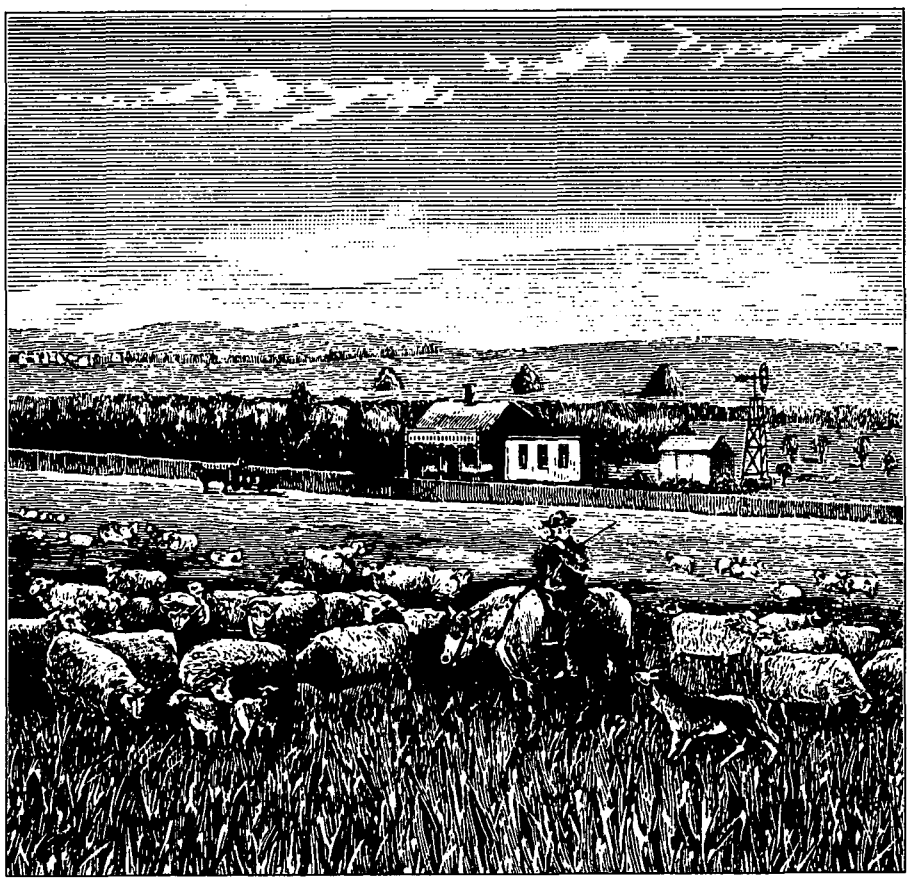
Australia ought now to make swift economic progress, but that won't happen anytime soon. First, the country is in such deep recession that nationalized assets probably won't fetch the price they should. Second, while the government rejects public ownership, it clings to syndicalism, i.e., to trade-union domination of industry and commerce. Third, the government is determined to continue intervening in the economy, even after it has sold off its industries.

The economy was in recession for much of 1990, although federal treasurer Paul Keating refused to admit it. In March, Keating said there would be no recession; in August, he said there was no recession; and, in late November, he suddenly said that there had been a recession, but the worst of it was over. Statistics in December showed the recession worsening.

Qantas, the most attractive of the industries to be privatized, lost $A125 million in 1990 (compared to a profit of $A177 million the year before), so it won't have the appeal that a prospering British Airways had in 1984 when Mrs. Thatcher sold it off. Bank profits are down, due to bad loans and bankruptcies in the smaller trades and industries. Two of the three leading television networks are in receivership. The Nine Network lost $A618 million in 1990. Farmers cannot sell their wool; automobile dealers cannot sell their cars. Construction has come to a standstill, with vacancies for skilled workers down by more than 50 percent in the past year.

The trade unions' preeminence dampens hopes of recovery. The cost of labor is so high that Australian industries can neither attract capital nor compete with the industries of other nations. Australia has a remarkably high proportion of skilled men in its workforce, yet it exports hardly any manufactured products. It imports cars, computers, machinery, and electronics; it exports coal, wool, gold, wheat, and oil. The few successful manufacturing firms export such little-traded goods as concrete and packaging.

Employers are to blame for continuing government intervention in the economy. The wool industry—historically the most important in a nation that "grew on a sheep's back"—can sell to the state at a fixed price anything it doesn't sell on the open market. Last year, the state bought 70 percent of the crop—a coarse wool, unwanted in a market eager for a finer weave—and stockpiled it. Economists have shown that if the government were to withdraw, farmers would have to switch to the finer wool, which they could easily sell to consumers. But the farmers dread the risks and shake-out of the change; they want the subsidy system to continue, even if the stockpile becomes a mountain.



Journalists share these habits of mind. The past year was a bad one for publishing. The four leading newspapers in Melbourne and Sydney were consolidated into two, and several smaller local papers lost their independence to the three big chains. Every daily paper in the state of Victoria lost circulation (the Melbourne *Herald* 9 percent), and the Adelaide *News* in South Australia lost 7 percent. Public lamentations greeted these developments, but the state still forbids foreign ownership of newspapers. Australia remains blind to the example of England, where the best and most varied press in Europe flourishes only because foreign owners—the Astors, Beaverbrooks, Thomsons, and Murdochs—have been allowed to enter the market.

There is a distinctly Mediterranean quality to Australian politics: intrigue is frequent, making the decline in daily paper sales particularly disturbing. The press is an essential corrective here; scandals are never covered up, as in Europe. Even so, Australians take more interest in politics than most people. Their constitution demands as much; voting is compulsory. But it is institutions, not non-optional franchise, that best explain Australians' political passion. Whereas in America politics is world politics, the President a world leader, and the taxpayer the underwriter of world defense, Australian politics is about Australia. The legislator is likely to be the man next door, particularly in such places as Tasmania, where the population is small and politicians numerous.

The word "liberal" has not been debased in Australia as it has in America, and is still the name of a political party that preserves classic ideas of political liberty at the head of its beliefs. It attracts both conservatives and progressives, but its commitment to a national interest deprives it of the support of factions—the unions are behind the Labor party, while the farmers back the National (formerly Country) party. The Liberal party remains in opposition. It might be supposed to have middle-class support, but the middle class in Australia is not the powerful bloc it is in the United States or England. There are historical reasons for this.

When the British were colonizing Australia, they could not leave it to immigrants to make their own way and build a settlement, as they had done in North America. Australia was so far away, and its soil so hard to cultivate, that a colony would flourish only if immigration were subsidized. The government paid for convicts and soldiers to settle there, and paid lavishly, for fear

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Maurice Cranston, professor of political science at the London School of Economics, spent last fall as a fellow at the Humanities Research Center in Canberra.

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the French would colonize the place first. Next, the colonial authorities in Australia had to finance the journeys of poorer free immigrants, and could do so only by selling land to rich immigrants. The men whose passages were paid were carefully chosen for their skills; the unskilled were unwanted. As a result, Australia acquired a working-class population sophisticated enough to make sure it received a high price for its labor. Those who bought land, which was more extensive and more expensive than land in Canada, tended to be younger sons of the English land-owning gentry, who held the Tory notion that the government should give more consideration to agriculture than to industry and commerce. The Australian upper class thus made common cause with the Australian skilled working class.

Educated middle-class immigrants and entrepreneurs of the type who were to be the chief motor of America's progress were not encouraged to come to Australia. The situation was not improved by the British government's policy in the nineteenth century of transporting organizers of illegal trade unions and Irish rebel politicians to serve their sentences in Australian penal colonies. As soon as they were released, they mobilized Australian workers into a militant political force, one the Communists almost got a grip on in the 1950s.

Australia's immigration policy was nevertheless largely a success. Since the possession of either skill or money has been demanded of every immigrant, there is no underclass of the unskilled and alienated turning to drugs and crime, as there is in the United States and Western Europe. Even in Sydney's most *louche* quarters, it's safe to walk at night, and every Australian city has a kind of open-air life Americans have not known for forty years. Immigrants from rural southern Europe have added a Mediterranean *joie de vivre* to the solid Anglo-Irish bulk of the population. The Asian minority has discreetly Westernized, and, in any case, is not numerous enough to alarm those Australian nationalists in dread of the Yellow Peril. Only the Islamic group seems out of step, so much so that a senior woman judge recently suggested that polygamy be legalized to keep the Moslems happy.

Most Australians, polygamous or no, regard happiness as a duty. They are free of that ruinous middle-class disease, anxiety. People are active, fit, and well fed on an old-fashioned diet. Sport is taken as seriously as religion in Tibet; work commands nothing like the same devotion. Union members strike at the drop of a hat, airline pilots and actors as readily as truck drivers and keypunchers. The unions' first priority is reducing working hours, and Australia's work week is now about the shortest in the world. The library in which I had a desk is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., because the university cannot afford to pay union overtime rates to staff after business hours and the unions will not allow the university to employ graduate students to keep the premises open.

Australia has a more vigorous cultural life than one might expect, given that so many of its stars have departed for England or America. There is still a large reservoir of talent, and a public to appreciate it. In vocal music, Australia is second only to Italy. Its Sydney Opera House is not only an architectural sensation for which citizens willingly paid astronomical sums, but also a temple to the national art of song. Even Hawke, who often plays the part of barroom redneck, has been known to swoon in the presence of a diva. Besides, the stars of several arts are beginning to return.

The conspicuous absentees are the leading ladies of feminism. Germaine Greer, whose book *The Female Eunuch* is a bible of the women's movement, shows no sign of leaving her homes in Tuscany and England to return to Sydney. Jill Ker Conway, whose beautifully written account of an Australian woman's predicament in *The Road from Coorain* was a bestseller in England in 1990, transmits her message from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The lesser figures who are left to plead for women's rights have an uphill struggle in a country where males traditionally prefer outdoor sports and drinking with "mates" to courting females, and where women's rights has to compete with animal rights, gay rights, Aboriginals' rights, and—above all—conservationism, which has already produced a Tasmanian Green party that holds power in the state parliament.

The Greens—who demand protection for both vegetation and the animals, such as kangaroos, that destroy it—are not the most logical champions of the environment. More practical are the conservationists in the mining industry, who have an excellent record of taking care of the land. The Greens are too left-wing to appreciate this, but at least they have not yet gone the way of the German Greens in forging alliances with residual Marxists left in the pan after socialism has been flushed down the drain.

Australia's remaining Marxists form one of the smaller factions in the Labor party. A few months ago, it looked as if they might join with other blocs in replacing Bob Hawke with Paul Keating as party leader. This was shortly before Keating's favorable rating in opinion polls dropped from 68 percent in August to 27 percent in December. Hawke's handling of privatization is one reason for his rebound. His oratory, a distinctive mix of sentimentalism and common sense, won the day at last fall's conference, as he convinced Labor to repudiate its traditional commitment to state ownership of industry. He has since won a measure of popularity by sending a naval force to the Gulf, despite left-wing demands for non-intervention. Hawke has convinced the public that he is in command of his party, but whether he can convince his countrymen of the need to tackle syndicalism head-on is another matter. In a country as beautiful and temperate as Australia, the tendency is to live for the day rather than work for the morrow. □

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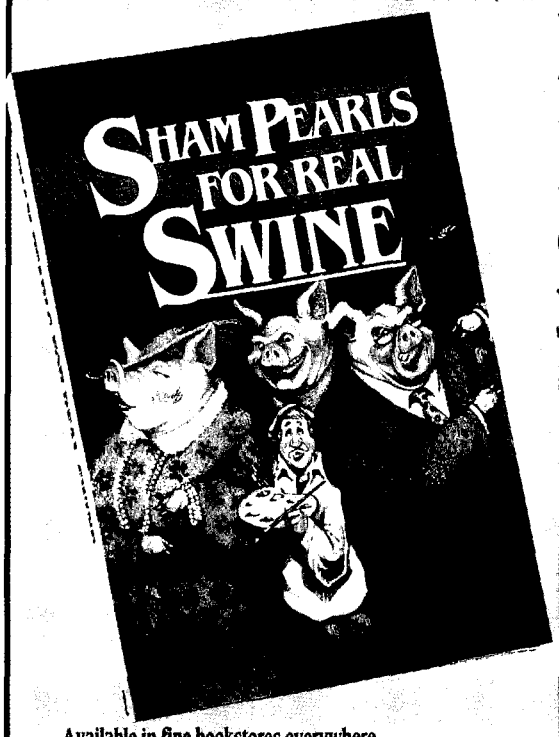

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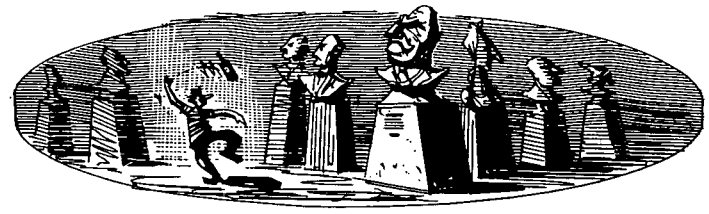

WE LIKED IKE

by Richard Brookhiser

Publishers marked the centennial of Dwight David Eisenhower's birth last year a little listlessly. Stephen E. Ambrose's standard biography appeared in a one-volume condensation, a publisher in Minnesota brought out a book of reminiscences by fellow moderate Republican Harold Stassen, and a third firm produced what is essentially a picture book, with text by the young historian Michael R. Beschloss.[1]

[1]*Eisenhower: Soldier and President*, by Stephen E. Ambrose, Simon and Schuster, $29.95; *Eisenhower: Turning the World Toward Peace*, by Harold Stassen and Marshall Houts, Merrill Magnus, $22.95; *Eisenhower: A Centennial Life*, by Michael R. Beschloss, HarperCollins, $29.95.

Richard Brookhiser's most recent book is The Way of the Wasp: How It Made America and How It Can Save It, So to Speak *(The Free Press).*

The best of these is the picture book. Stassen throws some interesting lights on the character of the man, mostly unwittingly, but his book is limited to Ike's years in the White House. Ambrose gives the most information of the three, but he also gives you prose like this: "Eisenhower and Patton immediately became and remained fast friends, despite their much different personalities . . . " Beschloss includes most of Ambrose's good anecdotes, highlights the important issues, and keeps things short and sharp. Besides, there are the pictures. Eisenhower was as preoccupied with appearances as Douglas MacArthur, but had a much better sense than MacArthur of which appearances would influence the people he sought to lead. Whether he led them effectively is another question.

Eisenhower grew up in Abilene, Kansas. His parents were members of the River Brethren, a pacifist reformation sect. Like many successful American men, he switched out of his odd religion on the way up and married a girl from the better side of the tracks. Mamie Doud, the daughter of a successful Denver meat-packer, had grown tired of "lounge lizards with patent leather hair." The "secret of our marriage," she would later joke, was that she and Ike had "absolutely nothing in common." Some joke. The frequent illnesses that marked her married life and her habit of staying in bed till noon, ill or not, suggest a depressed spirit as much as a delicate constitution.

Like Grant, Eisenhower brought to his military career a mind that was initially un-martial. His main interest at West Point was football, until a knee injury sidelined him. He spent World War I stateside, training volunteers for the newly organized Tank Corps—a task he had to accomplish without any tanks. He impressed a series of superior officers, including MacArthur, with his administrative abilities, and they kept him in administrative jobs, until the last of them, George Marshall, gave him his first battlefield assignment: command of Allied operations in North Africa.

The next three years, which took him from Algeria to the Elbe, were his finest. He had a clear and obvious task, imposed by reality and his political leaders, and he did everything he had to do to beat the Germans. "In a war such as this," he wrote, "when high command invariably involves a president, a prime minister, six chiefs of staff, and a horde of lesser planners, there has got to be a lot of patience . . ." He had a knack for keeping willful allies in harness and essential subordinates out of the doghouse. He saved George Patton's neck on two occasions, not because of their old friendship but because he needed Patton's abilities as a warrior. When Patton committed his last indiscretion, post-VE Day, Ike let him swing.

One conservative myth that we can junk is that, if Eisenhower had been more of a fire-eater, the Allies could have raced to Berlin ahead of the Soviets. Given the relative position of the British and American armies along the western front, the racing would have had to be done by Field Marshal Montgomery, whom it is impossible to imagine racing anywhere. Montgomery's competence waned as he went from Africa to Europe, even as that of the Americans waxed. He bungled the Falaise Pocket, he bungled the Battle of the Bulge, and he would have bungled a push to Berlin. Patton said it best: "Monty is a tired little fart."

Eisenhower's record as chief executive was more problematic. The judgment most often made of it, sometimes admiringly, sometimes dismissively, is that his was a "caretaker presidency," and the goal he seemed to set the most store by—balancing the budget—was a caretaker's ideal. "I'd like to know what's on the other side of the moon," he snapped after Sputnik, "but I won't pay to find out this year!" Liberals, it is amusing to recall, howled to have defense spending increased—not just hawks like Nelson Rockefeller and John F. Kennedy, but even doves like Adlai Stevenson. Eisenhower resisted as best he could.

Yet his fiscal holding operation left the structure of the modern state intact. The Old Guard of the GOP, notes Stassen, wanted to "repeal . . . programs put in place by the New Deal," while "we wanted to keep the ones that made sense over the long haul." After the debacle of deposit insurance, who makes the most sense? Turning to foreign affairs, it is still hard to read about Eisenhower's response to Suez and his non-response to Hungary without grinding the molars. (Since Hungary became free in 1989 anyway, one may ask what was lost by not doing anything in 1956? Nothing, except thirty-three years in the life of half a continent.)

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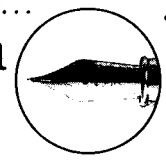

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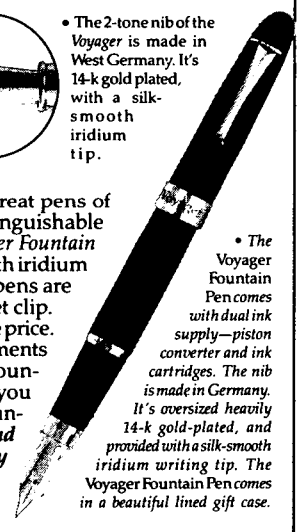

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The spring of his achievements flowed from a rock of self-control. Eisenhower had a wild temper as a boy. In one notable tantrum, he beat his fists bloody against a tree-trunk after his parents forbade him to go out trick-or-treating. As his mother salved and bandaged his wounds, she told him, "He that conquereth his own soul is greater than he who taketh a city." Eisenhower's temper stayed with him all his life, along with a tendency towards extreme depression, but he showed the first only when he wanted to, and the second not at all. "I firmly determined," he wrote, "that my mannerisms and speech in public would always reflect the cheerful certainty of victory."

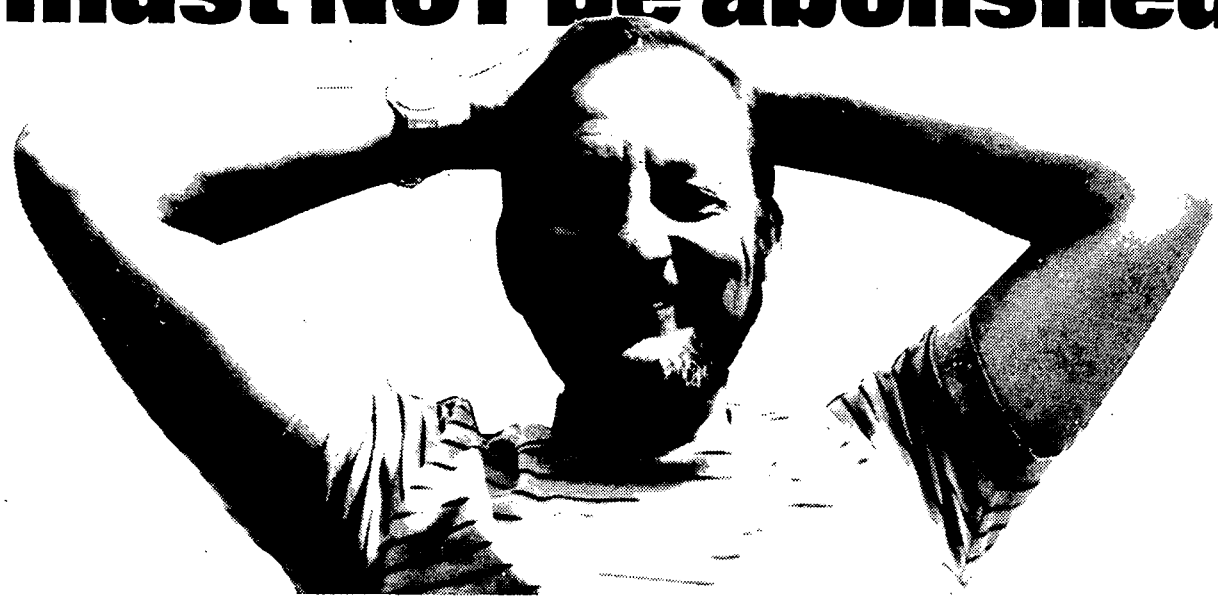
His success was also based on a cool self-centeredness. Power was the goal of his mature years and his means of gaining it was the appearance of modesty. He took in practically everybody. He had "a rather naive wonder at attaining the high position in which he found himself," wrote an English admiral after World War II. Wonder, possibly; naive, never. His 1952 correspondence with Truman, who was trying for the second time to persuade him to accept the Democratic nomination, is a grave comedy of disingenuousness, climaxing, on his part, with the wonderfully evasive line, "This answer is as full and frank as I am able to devise."

The only man who ever tied him at his own game (no one beat him) was Richard Nixon. The occasion was the Checkers speech. When the scandal of Nixon's secret trust fund blew up, Eisenhower's backers, who had let Nixon on the ticket only as a bridge to the Old Guard, wanted him lynched. Eisenhower recognized that, if his running mate left the ticket in disgrace, "we can't possibly win," but was determined that Nixon save himself. Nixon's TV agon not only turned Eisenhower's flank by appealing over the hero's head to the GOP rank and file, but forced all the candidates, including Eisenhower, to disclose their finances. Eisenhower made Nixon pay for his victory for the next eight years. The anecdote about Ike, asked by a reporter to give an example of a "major idea" that the vice president had come up with, replying, "If you give me a week, I might think of one," has become folkloric. But my favorite example of torture was the moment, in the home stretch of the 1960 election, when Mamie, via Pat Nixon, begged Richard to ask Ike *not* to go on an expanded campaign swing, for reasons of health. So two of the people that Eisenhower had slighted found themselves conspiring to ask him not to do something that one of them desperately needed, so potent was Ike's hold on them. What tangled webs we weave, when first we practice to . . . be modest.

Popularity can be measured at the polls. Reputation, which is the plaything of intellectuals, is more fickle. Eisenhower's, during the first glow of Camelot and the Great Society, was quite dim. But as the reputations of his successors tarnished, his brightened. Beschloss marks the turning points: a 1967 article in *Esquire* by Murray Kempton, which hailed him as the "great tortoise on whose back the world sat for eight years," and a 1982 book, *The Hidden-Hand Presidency*, by Princeton political scientist Fred Greenstein. Paul Johnson's account of the Eisenhower years in *Modern Times* was rapturous.

Let's hold the applause, at least for the second of his two careers. President Eisenhower was indeed a caretaker. He left no will to resist the continuing expansion of the state at home, and no clear principles for foreign policy—none that the sixties followed, anyway. His greatest service came in uniform. When history and FDR and Churchill told him what to do, he was superb. He conquered his soul, and he took cities. □

Why Rent Control must NOT be abolished



As former owner of a small townhouse in Manhattan, I used to think that rent control was a law that would be abolished just as soon as enough people found out what a rip-off it was. I even wrote a book poking fun at New York City's fifty-year-old "temporary wartime measure" in the hope that sardonic ridicule would accelerate its demise. I now realize I was wrong. Far too many people benefit from rent control for it to EVER be abolished.

Without rent control causing thousands of perfectly usable buildings to be abandoned, the city's drug pushers would not have all those safe, rent-free apartments in which to conduct their business.

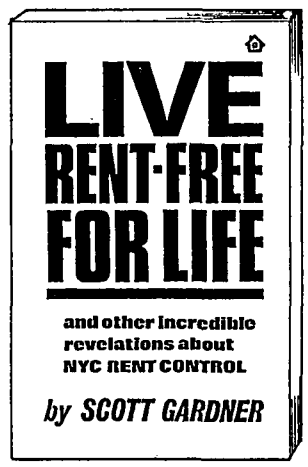
Without rent control's active participation, the city's Bolsheviks and rabid tenant activists would have to postpone their Marxian agenda to destroy all private property. Then pity the inept, do-nothing bureaucrats who pretend to administer that rat's nest of gobbledygook statutes. Without rent control, they might have to go out and get REAL jobs.

And don't forget those poor political hacks who can only get elected by continuing to give the tenant lobby "something for nothing." Confiscating an owner's property with rent control fills the bill because buildings are the ONLY things in the city that can't be transported over the State line.

Even more catastrophic, without rent control, Mayor Dinkins, ex-mayor Koch, and hundreds of judges, politicians, and upper-income renters would then have to give up the cheap apartments they've enjoyed for years. These staunch idealists continue to pretend--and expect us to believe--that rent control is vital to protect the homeless from all those greedy, unscrupulous landlords.

But most important of all, without the heart-warming, inspirational experiences I had as a New York property owner, I never would have written my book, "Live Rent-Free For Life," which makes me the first landlord in the world to actually make money out of rent control. If this law gets booted, my book becomes obsolete and I'm out of business.

Since you now see the chaos that would ensue if rent control were abolished, you can assuage your disappointment (and laugh yourself silly) by reading the first book ever written that reveals the wild and wacky world of rent control as it really is: a socialist's dream, an economist's nightmare, and a blatant government scam too lucrative to give up. It all adds up to a vast untapped field of comedy for YOU to enjoy. But order a copy now, before the political hacks, inept bureaucrats, enterprising pushers, rabid Bolsheviks, and upper-income renters decide to abolish yours truly. Learn how you too can "Live Rent-Free For Life." Send $11.95 (postage incl) to:



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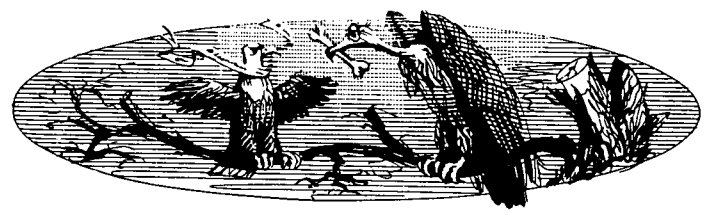

THE MALIBU PLAN

by Benjamin J. Stein

Well, it had to happen. In the 1980s, taking a cue from the big boys—the Trumps, the Belzbergs, the Icahns, the Farleys—and everyone else who got a museum wing named after him, I led my own little family into the wonderful world of leverage. We borrowed for everything, sold and leased back everything, bought multi-disc CD players, trips to Kenya, houses in Malibu, thoroughbred German short-haired pointers, Beemers, Benzes, and a helluva lot of fresh salmon fillets.

All of this was "supported" by the single slender toothpick of one very vulnerable man's earnings and the certainty that it would all be saved by an everlasting tide of prosperity, rising property values, and still more borrowing. I would leave it to Tommy, my three-year-old, to work out the payments sometime in 2020 or there abouts, when everyone was on the cover of *People* for being a billionaire. I wanted not only the fifteen minutes of fame that Andy Warhol had promised me, but also the middle age of living like a Trump.

Benjamin J. Stein is a writer and actor living in Malibu, California.

Now it's 1991 and, like everyone else, I'm busted. Property here in Malibu can't be sold for love or money (unless you're willing to take less than a million dollars for a 2,000-square-foot house a mile from the ocean, and that's just plain insulting). The Beemer's battery is dead. I'm drinking tap water. You get the picture.

The worst thing is that the creditors are baying at my heels. The stereo store. The BMW dealer who was supposed to have fixed the generator. The bank that leased me the Beemer in the first place. The bank that insanely gave me a mortgage on this house in Malibu.

If I were the me of ten years ago, I might be worried. But not today. Not since I learned my lessons from Trump and Farley and the people who run some of the big retail chains. If I can't pay my bills, if I'm overextended, that's not *my* problem. That's the problem of the fools who loaned me money.

Here's my plan. First, I blithely tell the people at the bank that holds the mortgage on my house that I can't pay it anymore (even if I can). If they want to repossess my little shack and add it to the mountain of houses they already have, good luck to them—I'll move into my RV. Then I tell the same thing to the people who made the lease on my car. If they want a repossessed car that gets about three miles to the gallon to try to sell in today's world of two-dollar gasoline, hey, guys, get the battery charged up and go for it. Likewise with all my stereo equipment: if you guys want to try to resell my CD players in a retail environment where stores pay customers to take new ones, do it.

Then I invite them over for some smoked salmon (I still have a lot of it in my freezer) on my deck, and tell them that they can either eat the salmon with worthless collateral for dessert, or they can listen to my "prepackaged" bankruptcy plan, which I have worked out with my lawyers, who double as German short-haireds.

For the mortgage holder, I will need a loan of about a hundred K, to be used (of course) for the mortgage payments on my house for the next ten years. Those payments, in turn, will be far less than they had been, because the package calls for my mortgage to be reduced by half. In return, the bank mortgage holder will get a new issue of stock in Stein Family, N.V., a Netherlands Venture which is a subsidiary of Benjyrama, L.P., a Bahamas Partnership, which in turn is held by Trixie-Ginger Partners, of Zug, Switzerland. The new issue, unless called, allows the bank to have a 15 percent dividend, payable in the shares of yet another corporation, GSP Associates, which holds as assets fertilizer products manufactured by Trixie-Ginger Partners (there is presently no public market in these shares). The mortgage holder's shares of Stein Family, N.V., also allow a 50 percent share in any capital gains from the sale of my house, after I have made 20 percent a year on the whole price of the house.

You guys at Bank of America don't like it? Here are the keys. And watch out for those ants near the refrigerator.

For the BMW lender, I simply cannot allow such generous terms. My deal for them is that I get a *new* 850, gasoline and insurance for a year, and an eight-times-oversampling NAK CD player for the dashboard. In return, they get 49 percent of any proceeds from the old BMW, a new preferred in Benjyrama, L.P.'s main subsidiary, Rejectron, which holds as its main assets certain written materials in my files for which no ready use has yet been ascertained, but which is sure to find some market in the future, according to Benjysuncle Partners, a management consulting firm of Hackensack, New Jersey. Rejectron pays 20 percent dividends of the actual raw material manufactured by Trixie-Ginger Partners, which will be appraised by Benjysuncle Valuation Partners, of Passaic and Pacoima, and delivered weekly in large green bags.

If they don't like it, let them have the car with its permanently dead battery in their garage, and let them try to sell it to buyers who won't give them the kind of deals I'm offering.

As for the stereo dealers, well, they can come over and listen to the great KEFs they sold me on credit any old time. That is, any old time I'm not at home and need someone to, uh, manage Trixie-Ginger Partners.

I have to say that I like it a lot. In fact, I've been talking about it at my health club (membership bought on credit, of course), and a number of my fellow health fiends have offered me generous retainers to help them out with their own packages, many of them

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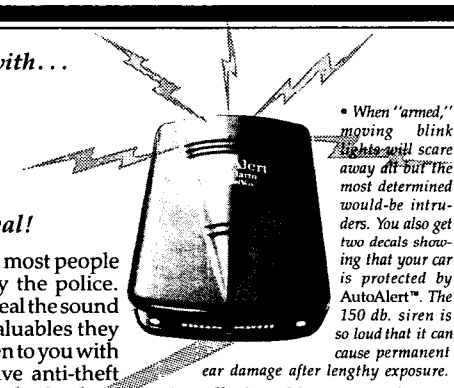

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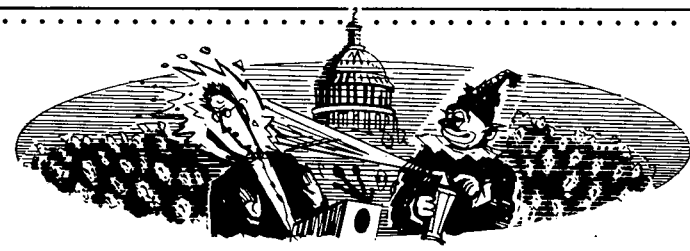
involving collections of Judy Garland photos. I'll look at any cash offer, I tell them, and they mostly leave me alone. One or two have bitten, though, and I think that's where the money will come from for my boy, Tommy. In fact, maybe that will be Tommy's career as well. In the next century in America, all of the money will be in poverty.

And it's getting to be kind of a pleasure thinking about it. I can't wait to get behind the wheel of the 850, with my Tommy next to me, and drive by the local bank. If we keep going like this, I'll tell him, we'll own that, too. □

REFLECTIONS



MAGGIE'S MAGIC

by Newt Gingrich

Do ideas matter to politicians? Do words mean anything to them? Do speeches change history? The Washingtonian answers are *No, No,* and *No.* The politics-as-gossip tone of American political debate rejects the notion that words and ideas are important.

A typical Briton might think otherwise. For the conservative revolution that brought Margaret Thatcher to power in 1979 changed Great Britain radically, and in her success story words mattered very much and ideas explained a great deal. Mrs. Thatcher transformed the Conservatives into a work-oriented, business-promoting, meritocratic party. She used a divided opposition and an unaccountable left wing to serve the longest continuous term as prime minister in the twentieth century. She made Britain a country of home-owners (70 percent, compared to 57 percent when she took power) and shareholders (20 percent, up from 7 percent). On her watch, trade-union membership fell from 13 million to 8 million, and days lost to strikes from 30 million to 3 million. It is a measure of the contraction in union power that, in the 1987 elections, 40 percent of skilled manual workers voted Tory, only 36 percent Labour.

When a leader dominates government for eleven years, resuscitating her country and her party, she deserves attention. When she does so in the name of values American conservatives hold dear, she deserves study. Mrs. Thatcher has already been well served by two biographies. *The Iron Lady,* by political reporter Hugo Young, describes Thatcher as an operative within the political system, rather than as a revolutionary. Peter Jenkins's *Mrs. Thatcher's Revolution* puts her within the framework of British history, charting the collapse of the welfare state as a model and the Thatcherite efforts to replace it.

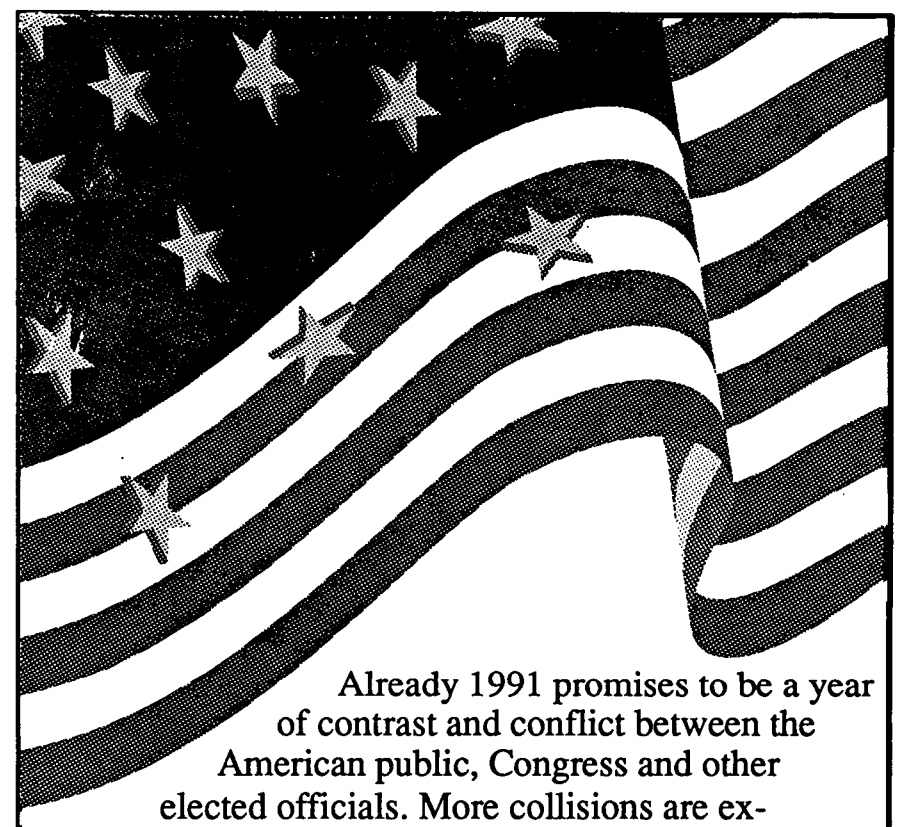
Young, Jenkins, and other observers of the prime minister have admired her decisiveness, her courage, and her dogged persistence even in the face of the most frustrating opposition. But on smaller issues Mrs. Thatcher was a far more cautious risk-taker than most realize. While she could take enormous gambles with great courage—deflationary monetary policies, the Falklands, stonewalling striking coal miners, the poll tax—she often procrastinated and avoided lesser ones. Like Reagan, she was vaguer and more cautious than many of her allies would have wished. Like Reagan, too, she won large victories that overwhelm her small failures. Mrs. Thatcher's story provides several lessons for American conservatives.

First, are we prepared to be decisive and positive? American conservatism must replace the welfare bureaucracy with an opportunity society based on American values—from the school board to the White House, from the private business to the voluntary association. The goal should be within our grasp, for, compared with Britain, the United States is a remarkably decentralized and voluntaristic country.

Second, do conservatives have the courage to support political allies when they are right and oppose them when they are wrong? To support President Bush, for example, on Iraq, quotas, and the right to life, while opposing him just as rigorously on taxes? Conservatives are comfortable extolling allies (e.g., Reagan) and assaulting opponents (e.g., Carter), but the future will involve making alliances on specific policies with leaders we oppose on others. While this is a more complicated, frustrating, and confusing assignment than conservatives are used to, it may be the only path toward replacing the welfare state in the next decade.

Third, can conservatives return to key themes? If we can invent policies that help people live better lives, voters will eventually insist that politicians pass them. School choice, individual savings accounts, tenant ownership, and other ideas have to leave the laboratories of Heritage, Cato, Hudson, and the Manhattan Institute and enter the practical world of elective politics. After a decade of theorizing, there are remark-

Newt Gingrich (R-Georgia) is Minority Whip in the U.S. House of Representatives.



Already 1991 promises to be a year of contrast and conflict between the American public, Congress and other elected officials. More collisions are expected with regards to the budget, healthcare reform, taxes and environmental issues.

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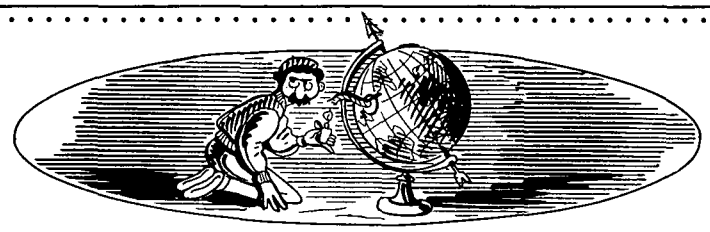
ably few "empowerment" proposals explained in a form—brochure, audiotape, videotape—that galvanizes citizens to demand they be implemented as policy. Mothers Against Drunk Driving was the most powerful conservatizing grass-roots effort of the 1980s. We need five to ten more such efforts that rouse citizens to pressure politicians. If we invent policies that excite citizens, the White House will have to learn to reach out to citizens.

Fourth, can American conservatives be as flexible as Mrs. Thatcher was on lesser issues? In fifteen years of party leadership and eleven as prime minister, she never succeeded in creating an ideological monolith. Can American conservatives manage a center-right coalition in which we will be often frustrated and rarely entirely satisfied?

Finally, can conservatives recruit enough activists willing to learn the art of politics? For all her courage and commitment, Margaret Thatcher was first and foremost an elected politician. She learned the art of winning elections in the Oxford Union, in the House of Commons, in party leadership elections. Ultimately, mastery of elective politics was the foundation of the house that Thatcher built. □

SPECTATOR'S JOURNAL



THE OTHER PERESTROIKA

by John Train

Johannesburg

Almost nobody believed that President F. W. de Klerk would bring real democracy to South Africa, any more than most in the West initially believed Gorbachev, but it's happening at a gallop. Two hundred apartheid laws have been repealed, and the rest are on the way out. A one man–one vote constitution is in the works.

De Klerk and Nelson Mandela both see a window of negotiating opportunity, with each believing he can do better now than if events were to move toward a showdown. The government is thinking of a universally elected lower house, balanced by an upper chamber representing all communities but elected for longer terms and otherwise weighted to have a more conservative tilt, and whose consent would be needed to pass legislation. Drafting committees are working overtime—just as they are in Eastern Europe—to learn from the U.S. and from other constitutional experience how to achieve this balanced effect. De Klerk believes there is enough political diversity and good sense in the country so that no one faction will dominate. He is far from sure, though, that the majority of whites will join him in making that bet, and therefore will probably not submit his plan to them for a vote, but rather proceed directly to a universal referendum on a new constitution.

The problem is that most blacks believe that political change will mean sudden economic change as well. Servants half-expect to take over their masters' homes, manual laborers look forward to becoming vice-presidents, and millions of squatters in shantytowns dream of good jobs and comfortable housing. The notion that successful economic development will call for decades of training and toil is alien to a half-illiterate population whose average age is just over twenty. Whatever happens, there will be a lot of disappointment.

A foretaste of the breakdown in government came in the murder of most of the council members in the black "townships," which are terrorized by ruthless boys of fifteen and sixteen, whose lives are built around violence, not work. (Half of all black school-age children are out of school.) These killings are not just tribal clashes; they are encouraged by those who oppose change (notably conservative Afrikaners), and also reflect political rivalries, as well as the tension around workers' hostels crowded with single men.

As the township situation illustrates, there is more to South African politics than black against white. The country is complex, like America. For instance, the Indians and Cape "coloureds" (typically a mixture of black and Asian), each with its own chamber in parliament, have interests separate from those of the blacks and each other. And an Afrikaner farmer with no escape hatch sees the world differently from an Anglo businessman with a British passport and funds abroad. The Afrikaners arrived in an empty land about the time the Pilgrims reached America, and developed a distinctive language and religion. Like the Mormons, they thought they had found the promised land. Now they face with anguish the prospect of being engulfed by their tribal neighbors.

Another element of this complexity is that while many black leaders are rabidly anti-white or Marxist, others are capitalists who consider the white presence essential to South Africa's prosperity. Zulu chief Gatsha Buthelezi, for example, sounds like a mayor of New York, pleading for harmony instead of hate; he could well enter into a more or less formal alliance with a white centrist party that might end up holding the balance of power.

Governmental restrictions have eased so much in South Africa that the campaign for economic sanctions has lost its purpose. A recent Gallup Poll showed 82 percent of South African blacks opposed to them. The ANC still favors sanctions because it wants to claim credit for their abolition when it achieves its political aims. However, the U.S., Britain, and Europe don't want all power to go to the ANC; on the contrary, we should reward accommodation and flexibility. The danger comes from extremists on either wing who think that if they hold out adamantly they can provoke an armed showdown and dominate the ruins.

But have sanctions worked anyway? Those who favored them all along like to claim now that they worked, but it's hard to show how. To start with, stock divestiture—an American university selling its shares to the Japanese, for example—makes it less likely, not more, that the company will leave South Africa or act benevolently if it stays: the gadfly has been removed.

The arms embargo was counterproductive: South Africa, formerly dependent on the West for its weapons, developed a highly sophisticated billion-dollar arms industry that has grown into the country's largest exporter of manufactured goods. Today, opposite our troops in the desert, Iraq has deployed perhaps the world's finest self-propelled artillery piece, the gigantic 155-mm G-6 bought from South Africa's Armscor. Our oil embargo resulted in the Sasol coal-into-oil process, which has made South Africa energy-independent. Our boycott of South African coal had an immediate impact, but the industry found new markets, opened lower-cost mines, and recovered. Fruit-industry profits were affected, as some citrus had to be sold as juice instead of fresh, but sales and volumes were maintained. It happened that the sanctions campaign coincided with a fall in the price of gold, South Africa's principal export, and thus with a general economic downturn, so it's difficult to assess the overall impact of sanctions. There was a passing effect on corporate profits, but probably no more than 100,000 jobs—one percent of an economically active population of roughly 10 million—were permanently lost.

The financial pickle in which South Africa found itself at that time had much to do with the drying up of bank credit, although loss of access to the IMF has hurt as well. But in consequence, South Africa has dug its way out of debt, and is now one of the world's most solvent countries—not entirely a disadvantage.

The disinvestment campaign created a billion-dollar bonanza for local businessmen, as they scooped up prime American companies at half or less of their appraised value, creating scores of instant tycoons. Not surprisingly, the new owners are less fastidious than their American predecessors. General Motors, for example, was bought out by its local managers, who thereupon not only tore up the Sullivan Principles—a code of enlightened employment practices adopted by most U.S. firms working in South Africa—but started selling to the South African

John Train travels frequently to Africa.

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police and military . . . not quite what we wanted.

The economic measures were indeed bothersome as a moral gesture, as have been the sports and performing arts boycotts (which, however, did not extend to omnipresent American films and TV programming). Still, the country's political transformation was inevitable for profound demographic, political, and economic reasons. A static population of whites could not expect to dominate forever a rising tide of blacks who were rapidly organizing trade unions and political parties.

The danger to the new constitutional order comes from the extremists on either wing—black fanatics or white traditionalists. Either faction could derail the de Klerk–Mandela understanding. Just as a retreat under fire is the hardest military maneuver, making profound changes in a faction-riven country is a supreme test of statesmanship.

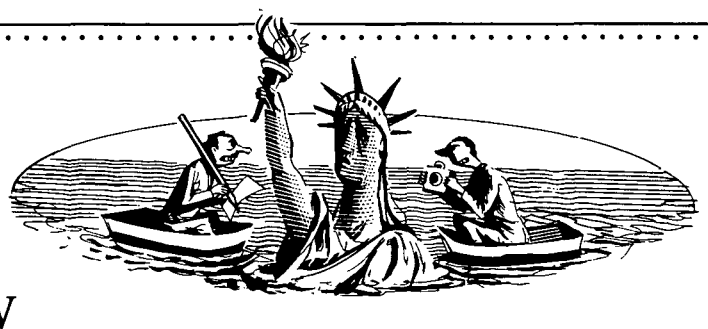
There are an estimated 2,700,000 weapons in the hands of white South Africans, particularly Afrikaners. "We're hunters," they often say, with a grim smile, "just like you Americans." Several times I heard the boast, "We conquered this country once, and we can do it again."

Would the army attack a breakaway group of armed whites? I doubt it. The far right claims strong support in the police and the army, and there seems little reason to challenge that view. Much of the army's recent experience and political indoctrination has been in fighting the ANC's foreign allies. Soweto and most of the other townships were designed so that they could be choked off by troops and armor. If things got bad enough, that's what it might come to.

However, the 15-year-olds brandishing their automatic weapons have little conception of the power of artillery or helicopter gunships, and could well be provoked into having a try at an uprising whose suppression could stall the country's economic and political development for decades.

The de Klerk–Mandela entente is South Africa's first—and perhaps last—chance for profound change without bloodshed. It deserves our encouragement. Easing sanctions, even if they never meant much, is the right signal. □

PRESSWATCH



PREFERRING THE LAW

by Terry Eastland

Last fall, the committee of the Fiesta Bowl, held in Arizona, decided it had to atone for the state's refusal to approve a Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. So it fashioned a plan to award $100,000 to each of the two participating universities (Alabama and Louisville) for scholarships for blacks only. A Bush appointee at the federal Department of Education, Michael Williams, a lawyer charged with enforcing civil rights law, saw a problem.

Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, universities receiving federal funds, as both were in this instance, may not lawfully award scholarships solely on the basis of race. So Williams wrote bowl officials, commending them for their efforts "at advancing minority opportunities" but advising them of the universities' "civil rights obligations." Williams suggested other ways Fiesta officials might design a scholarship program that would not complicate the legal lives of Alabama and Louisville but still accomplish the bowl's purposes.

Williams released his letter to the media the day he sent it, and his action made the wires, with short and simple stories. The media and political firestorm did not come until December 12, when the *New York Times* ran a lengthy front-page piece reporting Williams's Fiesta Bowl action as part of a seemingly new Education policy against most race-exclusive scholarships. The story featured reactions from college administrators and scholarship fund directors who were, to put it mildly, not pleased.

All the major media—print and picture alike—would now do the story big. That Michael Williams himself held a previously scheduled press conference on the same day to articulate his law enforcement goals would make the story bigger still.

On the evening of December 12, CBS misreported and distorted the story. Eric Engberg said that Education would "cut off federal funds to schools that use race as a criterion in awarding scholarships." But Williams had not announced that. Williams was taking aim not at race-based scholarships but at race-exclusive ones—those that make race the *determining* factor.

Nor did Williams say that Education would cut off federal funds to schools found in violation of the law, something the *New York Times* had included in its lead paragraph and which Engberg and others repeated. Such cutoffs have never been implemented, because universities and colleges have typically found ways to comply with government regulations. Engberg did not distinguish between a violation of law and a sanction, as would have been appropriate, nor did he indicate the extreme unlikelihood of the latter.

Engberg quoted Theodore Hesburgh as pledging his own "dead body" to stop the policy, Benjamin Hooks as saying he had never seen a policy "more stupid, more outrageous, more irrational and more prejudiced," and a student on a minority scholarship as saying he'd be "in a bind" without it. Engberg quoted no one, other than Williams, in defense of the policy. Botched and biased stories like Engberg's were common as the media raced to match the *Times*'s front-pager.

Later that night, CBS's Charles Kuralt managed to outdo his colleague Engberg. On "America Tonight," Kuralt "reported": "Scholarships set aside for racial or ethnic minorities, [Education] said, discriminate against the white majority and are, therefore, illegal." But for Education the problem with race-based scholarships was their inconsistency with a law intended to make race neither an advantage nor a disadvantage in the allocation of society's goods and opportunities. What Kuralt did here was falsely (and maliciously?) attribute to Williams a view of discrimination that turns on *which* race is being discriminated against.

On December 13, the print media continued to feature reactions from university types like Hesburgh. *Time* remarked that it "was hard to find anyone . . . in the education world who did not express dismay." Tony Mauro of *USA Today*, on the other hand, deserves credit for finding at least one calm observer. "I don't know what all the hoopla is about," he quoted a Georgetown law professor (Charles Abernathy) as saying. "What they did has been the law . . . now, they are going to enforce [it]."

One reason for the hoopla was the media's insistence on portraying the

Terry Eastland is resident fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

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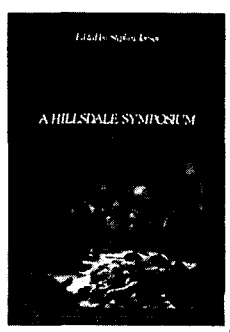

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policy as part of an aggressive new Republican strategy to oppose quotas. But this was not the case, as most in the media eventually figured out. Williams acted purely (and naively, as he later said) as a law enforcement official. While profiles of Williams noted his previous tenure in the Civil Rights Division of the Reagan Justice Department, none of them understood its relevance. At Justice, civil rights lawyers often learn about possible violations of law from media accounts; at Education they often wait for complaints to roll in. Williams took his Justice approach to Education, responding to a situation he had learned about in media accounts. Moreover, he dared to acquaint the world of higher education with a law his predecessors had generally ignored. What everyone took to be a new policy was not really new—it had just not been taken seriously. Yet for taking it seriously Williams was reviled by the *New York Times* as "a zealot gone mad." It was implied that conservative government is okay, as long as it does nothing.

On December 13, the White House let it be known that (1) President Bush had problems with the Education policy and (2) neither he nor anyone else close to him had known what Williams was doing. On December 14, the *Washington Post* and other news organizations reported that the Education policy was now "under review." The *Post* reporters apparently did not ask why the White House had not undertaken a "review" when Williams first notified the Fiesta Bowl on December 4. But the answer was implicit in the story. "There was serious hysteria here," Kenneth J. Cooper and Ann Devroy quoted "one official" as saying. One reason for the hysteria in the White House was the hysteria in the newspapers and on television, which Lesley Stahl of CBS typified: "Someone [who? Stahl herself?] said to me today: 'This is Willie Horton Goes to College.' "

There were a fair number of *Time*-like advocacy pieces calling for a retreat from Williams's policy. On December 15, the *Washington Post* described how the Education Department (as the headline went) "Had Rejected Analysis Now Used in Ban on Race-Based Scholarships." Because opponents of Williams's policy were typically arguing from what the department had done before—i.e., from precedent, as opposed to federal statutes, the Constitution, and the Supreme Court's rulings—this story told it their way. The *Post* redeemed itself somewhat on December 17 with a piece that gave equal time to both sides.

One of the better accounts was the *New York Times*'s enterprising article (December 17) on how the policy had "highlighted a rift between established civil rights groups and a small but growing number of blacks who question whether members of racial minorities should get preferential treatment." Reporter Karen DeWitt noted the anti-racial preference views of author Shelby Steele, economist Walter Williams, and housing expert Robert Woodson. *Newsweek* carried a similar piece in its December 24 issue, quoting Steele: "The whole ruckus over preferences is a distraction from all the expense and effort it would take to bring black students up to par in elementary and secondary schools." It is notable, too, that the Education policy won the support of liberal columnists Richard Cohen and Clarence Page.

On December 18 Michael Williams held his second press conference within a week, this time to announce what the media had widely predicted would be a policy reversal. While most accounts stuck to the story line of a reversal or retreat, the *New York Times* reported that the "U.S. Lets Stand Curb on College Aid Keyed to Race." This was inaccurate, if for no other reason than Williams now was going to allow the Fiesta Bowl to give Alabama and Louisville race-exclusive scholarships after all.

On the other hand, part of "the curb on college aid keyed to race" did stand: universities receiving federal assistance may not lawfully use money from their own general operating budgets for race-exclusive scholarships. Most of the funding for those grants is found precisely there; it does not come from private parties such as the Fiesta Bowl. Some of the stories of the "policy reversal" muddled this rather large point and the law behind it. This is surprising, as Title VI is so clear that not even the White House politicians could rewrite it, although they did prevail upon Education to relax its enforcement apparatus for four years, to give colleges and universities time to review their scholarship programs.

I can sympathize with the journalists who were trying to cover the administration's revised policy. It was the strange product of a White House confused on matters of principle and law, lacking a civil rights strategy, and vulnerable to charges of "insensitivity" toward blacks. The post-mortems on the minority scholarship story made these points, though they failed to note the media's own role in fueling the hysteria that led to the policy revision. Nor did they observe the most important point: President Bush had missed an opportunity to encourage the nation to move away from programs of naked racial preference, and to invite it to "think anew," to borrow the President's favorite Lincoln quote, about matters of race and equal opportunity. ❑

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SOVIET PRESSWATCH

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

by Cathy Young

Today, we take a lens to the Soviet media in trying times. Independent news agencies have their phones cut off; provocative TV shows are canceled and Baltic TV stations liberated (*déjà vu* all over again) by Soviet tanks; Gorbachev moves to silence the pesky press.

Scouring the Soviet press of the past few weeks for foreshadowings of these grim events, one comes upon a *Moscow News* piece (December 23) on the ominous re-emergence of TV "journalist" Mikhail Leshchinsky, who used to do "upbeat reports from Afghanistan," which Soviet soldiers dubbed "Fairy-Tale Hour." Once the winds changed, Leshchinsky tried to carve out a new niche for himself covering the plight of disabled veterans, but the veterans didn't like it. He disappeared for a while—only to surface late last year as *Vremya*'s correspondent in Riga, talking "in a familiar breathless tone . . . about the persecution of Communists and of his beloved Army men." The *Moscow News* writer asks, "Are we, perhaps, being readied for a new adventure in which the friendship of nations will be cemented by tanks?"

While the KGB makes its comeback, optimists may point to proof that it is a new, capitalist-minded KGB. The year-old weekly *Kommersant* ("The Tradesman") reports in its December 3, 1990, issue that the KGB is offering economic espionage data to "Soviet organizations doing business on the international market." This was first disclosed by the deputy chief of the Moscow KGB press service, Major Andrei Oligov, on the TV program, "Good Evening, Moscow!" on November 24. In an exclusive interview, Oligov told *Kommersant* that this new KGB venture comes from the recommendations of KGB chief Vladimir Kryuchkov, and that "cooperation" between Soviet firms and a friendly KGB was already taking place. He wouldn't identify recipients of KGB espionage data, except to say that they included government firms and cooperatives affiliated with such, as well as joint ventures. "In principle," this broad-minded new KGB "can cooperate with any enterprises, including privately owned ones." Oligov also wouldn't say whether the KGB was charging a fee for its services—which include "confidential evaluation of the commercial viability and performance records of foreign partners"—but, a New Capitalist Soviet Man to the end, he "expressed the opinion that, in the long term, it should charge such fees."

A related *Kommersant* editorial notes that "market-style relations are penetrating into the Soviet way of life after all, albeit in somewhat exotic forms," and gibes that clients might be assessed "a special surcharge for dangerous work conditions if, while obtaining the data in question, the KGB agent was expelled from the country where he was stationed, or otherwise mistreated." Businessmen wondering whether the KGB would be willing to work on their behalf to check out whether a *Soviet* firm might be an unreliable business partner can contact them at: KGB, Dzerzhinsky St., 2, Moscow (tel. 921-0762).

Cathy Young is the author of Growing Up in Moscow *(Ticknor & Fields).*

Russians and Polls

Gorby fans like to say that one reason their pin-up boy doesn't always live up to Western expectations is that he has to deal with all those backward Russians thirsting for the old iron hand. Hedrick Smith, in *The New Russians*, is only the latest to endorse this view (though he providently laced his tome with enough disclaimers about the rise of democratic forces more radical than Gorbachev to be able to assert, in a letter to the *New York Times Book Review*, that the book is not in the least "Gorbocentric").

Well, in a poll taken in October 1990 and published in the November 18 issue of *Moscow News*, Soviets in twenty-one cities were asked, "What steps would be most likely to improve the situation in the Soviet Union today?" Nine percent answered "further strengthening of presidential power," while 16 percent chose "the establishment of a government willing to restore order with a firm hand"; 15 percent mentioned "the implementation of the Shatalin/Yavlinsky economic program," 8 percent spoke of "the establishment of a new central government that has the public's confidence," and 25 percent—the largest single group of respondents—opted for "the governments of the republics taking full power." In other words, we have 25 percent for "an iron hand" against 48 percent for an anti-imperial and/or democratic solution. Nine percent felt that nothing at all could improve the situation.

A November poll published in the December 9 issue of *Moscow News* sought to fathom Soviets' feelings about the coming winter. Three percent felt confident and 15 percent "hopeful"; "fear" was felt by 16 percent, but "anxiety" was the big winner with 61 percent. Questioned about their expectations for the next six months, 17 percent predicted "economic stabilization," while 27 percent expected "mass famine." Fifty-eight percent believed that "a wave of strikes" would begin; only 20 percent said that it would not. Forty-four percent expected the Soviet Union to disintegrate, while 34 percent said no.

Those surveyed were asked to select from a list of names the ones that they thought "would have great significance for the peoples of the USSR in the year 2000." Fifty-six percent named Jesus; Sakharov got 48 percent, Lenin 36 percent, and Gorbachev 26 percent. Some years ago, we may recall, John Lennon claimed that the Beatles would soon be more important than Jesus; hard to say, because the Beatles were not on the list.

Finally, the respondents were cruelly asked whose living standards the Soviet Union (or its erstwhile components) would match in the year 2000. One percent bravely chose "the most developed capitalist countries," while 15 percent more humbly selected "capitalist countries of mid-level development." Thirty-eight percent picked "developing countries" and 20 percent "the least developed countries of Asia and Africa."

Beria the Dead

Even as Gorbachev is quickly losing his image as the leader of reform, a most unexpected proponent thereof emerges from the murky recesses of Soviet history. On January 3 and 4, *Izvestia* published an account, with excerpts from recently declassified transcripts, of the July 1953 plenary session of the Central Committee of the CPSU—the one at which Lavrenty Beria, Stalin's dreaded minister of internal affairs, was proclaimed an enemy of the people and expelled from the party (soon to be shot as "an agent of international imperialism"). Beria has since become

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one of the most sinister and hated figures in Soviet history, and few people were concerned that he was shot not for his real crimes but on ludicrous trumped-up charges.

However, Nikolai Mikhailov's two-part *Izvestia* article, "In July 1953 . . . : Unknown Details of the Beria Case," reveals that, while some of the charges leveled at Beria at the fateful plenary session had to do with "unjustified repressions" and the accumulation of excessive police powers (as well as more titillating accusations of debauchery), the main charges involved *excessive liberalism*.

Among other things: according to Molotov, when the Presidium of the Council of Ministers discussed the massive discontent among East Germans, Beria "started talking about how we had no business building socialism in East Germany, and it would be all right if East and West Germany were united into a peaceful bourgeois state." Khrushchev complained that, when asked by Hungarian Communist chief Matyes Rakosi about the proper division of functions between the Council of Ministers and the Central Committee of the Party, Beria told him, "Let the Council of Ministers handle everything, and the Central Committee should be in charge of cadres and propaganda"—thus disparaging the party's leading role.

Furthermore, Beria had not only released the accused in the infamous "Doctors' Plot" (which the other members of Stalin's court conceded was the right thing to do) but also issued a special communiqué proclaiming the case a concoction, which "caused considerable harm to the interests of our state" as well as mental anguish to the Soviet people. In memoranda on the work of the secret police in Lithuania and the Ukraine in 1953, he had condemned forced Russification and the persecution of the ethnic intelligentsia! Finally, according to Molotov:

> He insulted [the dead] Stalin in the most unpleasant, offensive language. And all this under the pretense that now we have to live in a new way. . . . It is true that there were some excesses in the cult of personality, and comrade Stalin himself chided us for it, but that does not mean that we should now bend over backwards and silence such leaders as Stalin.

At which point, according to the transcript, there was a shout from the audience: "Right!" □

THE TALKIES

THIS GREAT DANE'S A DOG

by James Bowman

For me, the first principle of criticism is to assess a work of art for what it is, never for what it isn't—still less for not being what I think it should have been. I shall now proceed to violate that first principle. Franco Zeffirelli's new *Hamlet* is not Shakespeare. That it does not set out to be Shakespeare is advertised in the opening credits, where we are told that the screenplay is by Zeffirelli and Christopher DeVore "based on the play by William Shakespeare." Well, credits where credits are due. But why should it matter to us then that the movie is not Shakespeare's play?

Because in its attempt to make the story of Hamlet look more smoothly naturalistic (that is, more like a movie) it has robbed it of its most compelling element: the problematical nature of the character of its hero. "*Hamlet* without the prince" has become a catchphrase for leaving out the essential; well, here is *Hamlet* without the prince. Oh, it has mellow Mel Gibson looking the debonaire leading man, but what has that got to do with the tortured young man in his cloak of inky black who appears in Act I, scene ii of Shakespeare's play, before he knows anything about the murder of his father, and is eaten up with the poison of grief and hatred?

It is not *Hamlet* without the prince that I mind so much as *Hamlet* without the words. Shakespeare's poetry is what ultimately lifts this lurid melodrama above the level of the traditional revenge tragedy, and Zeffirelli, by chopping it all up, sinks it back down to this level. The first soliloquy is fragmented and made to seem no more than the natural mourning of a son for his father. And when Hamlet says, "I shall in all my best obey you, Madam," it is not, as in the play, a vicious insult directed at his Uncle Claudius but a dutiful submission to a loving mother's entreaties. Claudius is not even present.

The first third of the "rogue and peasant slave" soliloquy is cut out (because the player's account of the death of Priam, which inspires it, is too), and so the part which begins "Am I a coward?" seems to have no connection with morbid hesitation; it hardly seems more than a laudable self-doubt. Of course you aren't, dear. "How all occasions do inform against me" is cut (as is Fortinbras) and "To be or not to be" is left in, one suspects, simply because it is so famous. At any rate, it has little or nothing to do with the action of the play as Zeffirelli presents it to us. Hamlet's bad behavior to Ophelia is explained not once but twice as the consequence of his having spotted Polonius spying on him.

All this makes the prince more sympathetic, more like a standard movie hero, than Shakespeare intends him to be, but it also vitiates the tragedy. Horatio's tribute to his "sweet prince" should fall upon our ears with a shock: "sweet" is the last thing that Hamlet ever was to anybody, least of all himself. If you make him genuinely sweet, as Mel Gibson does, his death is only another version of Ophelia's: it has pathos but not tragedy. I confess that I liked the Zeffirelli *Romeo and Juliet*, but his *Hamlet*, with Helena Bonham-Carter's affecting Ophelia, even casts a shaft of light backward on that: Mr. Z does the "untimely frost upon the sweetest flower of all the field" well enough, but he hasn't really got much idea about tragic grandeur.

Maybe that's because the cinema itself hasn't. As it happens, this month has also seen the release of another Shakespeare adaptation: *Macbeth* transplanted into the streets of Little Italy in William Reilly's *Men of Respect*. And once again I strive in vain to overcome my phantom limb syndrome after the amputation of Shakespeare's language. It's not exactly that Macbeth's lines on the fulfilment of the first of the witches' prophecies,

> . . . Two truths are told,
> As happy prologues to the swelling act
> Of the imperial theme . . .

translated into "The old broad was right on the money" is repulsive in itself; it is rather that the demotic language further disconnects Mike Battaglia and Matt Duffy (get it?) from "the imperial theme" in whose context Macbeth and Macduff are something more than squabbling street hoodlums.

Similarly, Lady Macbeth never says anything remotely equivalent to Ruthie Battaglia's feeble "you have all these reasons to hesitate when you should be tryin' for sumpin'." Instead she says:

James Bowman is The American Spectator*'s movie critic.*

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. . . Art thou afeard
To be the same in thine own act and valor
As thou art in desire? Would'st thou have
that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would,'
Like the poor cat i' th'adage?

—words which resound with terrible reproach in nobler minds than Macbeth's. And, when the latter replies "I dare do all that may become a man," he is appealing to a more estimable standard than Mikey's ridiculous "I'm as vicious as the next guy."

This standard, of honor and degree and propriety, apparently does not translate well to the silver screen, although the first two *Godfathers* came close to making us believe in Sicilian *omertà* as its modern-day equivalents. *Godfather III* does not repeat this success. If we cease to care very much about Hamlet or Macbeth/Mike Battaglia because they are not verbally—and hence spiritually—imposing enough, we cease to care very much about Michael, Don Corleone, because we've seen too much of him already. He's done this number before.

And, come to think of it, maybe that's not such a difference after all. Al Pacino's Don lacks the verbal resources to show us more than his love of family and his canniness in street-fighting. His discovery and exploitation of corruption in the church is gratuitous and unconvincing: the equivalency thesis—that the legitimate power-structure is both continuous with and, if anything, more corrupt than that of the Mafia-dominated underworld—has been part of the subtext of the *Godfather* saga from the beginning. That's why Fidel Castro liked it so much. But it has never been less believable than it is here. And the docudramatic denouement ("This pope has powerful enemies; we may not be in time to save him") is just silly.

I begin to believe that the cinema, like the novel, simply cannot deal with poetry. For, like the novel, it is inherently prosaic and manages its audience's attention. By surrendering to this authorial authority we may be given access to a powerful individual vision, but we miss the richness, the variety, the ambiguity of reality itself, which poetry alone can convey. Nevertheless, prose as powerful as Tom Wolfe's in *The Bonfire of the Vanities* is not a linguistic experience to be sniffed at, nor one unsuitable for translation to the screen. That Brian de Palma has made such a thorough mess of it makes me fear that the cinema cannot deal with social satire anymore, either.

Wolfe's remarkable achievement was to make us understand and sympathize with most of the characters whose pretensions to various sorts of decency and respectability he so savagely punctured. Like the greatest of satirists, he makes us see ourselves, and especially our hypocrisy about race, in them. But de Palma has made them into cartoon figures and reduced the whole disturbing tableau of modern urban life to a moral fable, a ludicrous lecture on "decency" ("Decency is what your grandmother taught you, it's in your bones") from a black judge who is more Uncle Remus than Uncle Tom and quite undiscoverable as a character in the book.

His words are dud words. "Decency is not a deal or an angle or a hustle," he says, when what he means (I suppose) is that it shouldn't be any of these things but it's hard to escape the conclusion that they are just what it is. "Decency to me . . . " maybe, but, as Bart Simpson would say, who the hell are you? Alas, we know that already, too. You are Mr. Brian de Palma and I claim my prize for recognizing you. It was no easy job, either, since such a banal and merely wishful definition of decency could have proceeded from any of a million sources of lesser provenance than the adapter of Tom Wolfe. Words may not be as essential to a film as to a Shakespearean drama, but the lack of them can still ruin one.

In this context it is interesting to look at a film founded upon inarticulacy, like the Merchant-Ivory adaptation of Evan Connell's two novels about Middle America between the World Wars, *Mr. and Mrs. Bridge*. "For better or for worse," says Paul Newman's Mr. Bridge, "I turned out to be an attorney and not a poet." Such dry, self-depreciatory wit, which is insufficiently ironic to remove the suggestion that to him being a poet must be something very much like being an attorney, could stand as a motto for the whole film. And, on the whole, we are inclined to think it is for the better. If you want a definition of decency that is less glib and more compelling than Brian de Palma's, this film will provide it—without making that quality seem more attractive than it really is. The Bridges are decency personified, but they are so heartbreakingly stifled by their conventionality that they almost seem heartless.

Almost. For it is the film's great achievement, repeating that of the novels, that it can take these boring Babbitts and make attractive characters out of them. At the end, when the psychiatrist, of whom Mr. Bridge has always disapproved, asks him if he's ever known joy, the attorney replies: "I've known contentment, if that's what you mean." The audience, like the psychiatrist no doubt, wants to shake him and say, "NO! That's *not* what I mean." But if Mr. Bridge, in whom reticence has hardened into inarticulacy and who has no vocabulary for joy or love or any of the deepest feelings of the heart, could understand that, he would not be Mr. Bridge. If decency could ever be as lovely as virtue, this film would convince you of it; but somehow, I still don't think it can. Maybe that's because joy and love and virtue generate poetry while decency, a fundamentally negative attribute, necessarily generates inarticulacy.

I lead up to *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Jean-Paul Rappeneau's new film, with Gerard Depardieu in the title role, is at once a successful cinematic version of a classic play and a paean to articulacy over inarticulacy, to the power of language to convey feeling and to define character. Here are joy and love and virtue—and anger and jealousy and despair—generating language by the square meter. Unhappily for most of us, the language is French. Anthony Burgess has undertaken the bizarre task of translating Rostand's verse into English subtitles rendered on the screen as prose but in fact approximating to octosyllabic couplets—as if it were possible to shut one's ears to the voluble Cyrano's Gallic eruptions and mouth that jaunty English meter to the inner ear.

It isn't. But *Cyrano* is exciting and moving all the same. Partly this is because Depardieu brings to the role all the intensity that Mel Gibson doesn't bring to Hamlet. Depardieu really is an extraordinary actor, the range of whose talents can be sampled by *Cyrano* fans in the delightful but rather frothy Disney comedy, *Green Card*, to which he lends an unmistakable *gravitas*. His presence also underscores the fact that the character of Cyrano is oddly understandable to us. In this he is more like Mr. Bridge than that other avatar of articulacy, Hamlet. He is at heart a simple fellow whose internal life is as hidden away from public view as the Kansas City attorney's, but whose disguise is panache rather than blandness. What is disguised, moreover, is in no way mysterious: it is simply love for a beautiful woman and shame at his own ugliness. All this simplicity lends itself to cinematic treatment even if the poetry doesn't.

Even the seventeenth-century conception of honor presents us with few difficulties, because there is a kind of brotherhood of defeat that spans the ages and the cultures in between. When in the final scene Cyrano laments that it has been his fate to give words to others, from the foolishly inarticulate Christian to the "genius" Moliere, and be forgotten himself, we know in our own petty ways what it feels like; and when he meets death with defiance—"A man doesn't fight to win; it's better when the fight is in vain"—we can imagine for a moment what it would feel like to be so brave. Even the most esoteric code of honor is composed of those universal elements—discretion and loyalty, self-sacrifice and courage—plus the words appropriate to them. Maybe it's easier to understand, however, when the words are a little vague. □

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE FIRST UNIVERSAL NATION: LEADING INDICATORS AND IDEAS ABOUT THE SURGE OF AMERICA IN THE 1990s

Ben J. Wattenberg/The Free Press/418 pp. $22.95

Edward Norden

There are only two nations on this earth that are simultaneously fantasies and realities, those two being, of course, the tremendous United States of America and tiny Israel. Maybe that is what makes them, even when they're wrangling, such a nice couple. If America connotes new beginnings, fresh starts for one and all, the meanings of Zion are too well known to mention. The motto of both of these very peculiar U.N. members might be, "Look Up, Better Yet Come to Me." In fact, America has sometimes been pictured as a bigger if not better version of Zion, for example by John Winthrop, who is quoted in Ben Wattenberg's happy new book as comparing Massachusetts to "a city upon a hill." Put another way, just as there are two Jerusalems, the heavenly and the earthly, there are two Americas, the real one usually but not invariably falling somewhat short of the ideal.

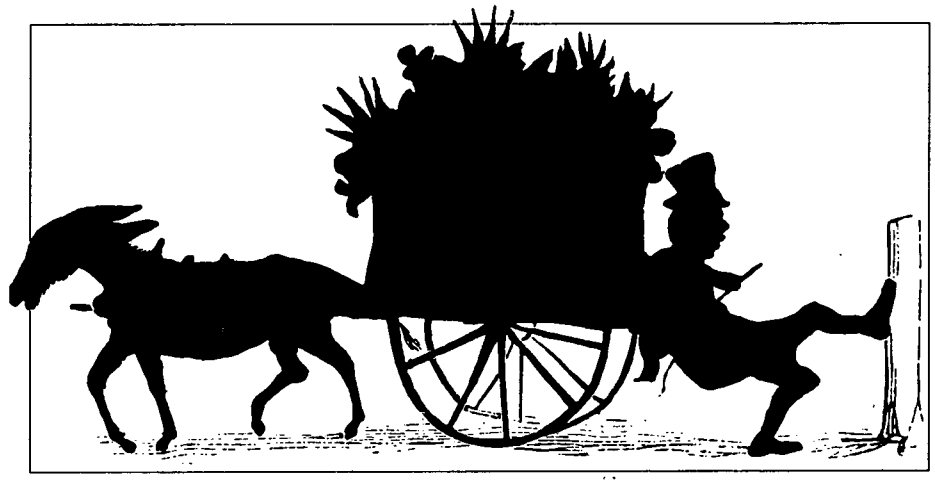
Wattenberg is an American who came this close to being an Israeli. It was because his mother and father left what was then Palestine in the 1920s that he could become a model of that type of first-generation American whose pride and belief in his native country is permanent and never, ever a secret. For years now, Wattenberg has been airing his views by means of TV appearances, his newspaper column, and books. He also has an appointment at the American Enterprise Institute, one of the too-many think-tanks in Washington that churn out position papers for presidential hopefuls to brood on. AEI was at one time something special, helping give intellectual cachet to the Reagan Revolution at home and abroad. Not that Wattenberg is a Republican—like many of the patriots who backed and guided Reagan, especially the Jews among them, he's a refugee from the Democratic party who still prays that it will someday come to its senses. In the meantime, he continues celebrating America and drumming up confidence in its future, justifying his feelings with statistics.

This is what he does also in his new book. It's a collection of columns and speeches from the day Reagan took office through the day Saddam took Kuwait, always chatty, always upbeat, always contrary to the conventional liberal wisdom, spliced together by commentary, autobiography, and lots of numbers. "Some 65 percent of Americans," we learn, "believe there is a personal God, compared with . . . 19 percent of Swedes." Wattenberg's point is that Americans are different, and, yes, better, deservedly still the envy, ideal, and hope of the world. Reprinted here are prophetic items on the collapse of Communism and how America can hasten it. There's something of a defense of Ollie North, and an accurate prediction of the fate of the Sandinistas at the ballot box. There are statistics according to which poverty in America is down, income up, and the high school drop-out rate at an all-time low. There are claims that most Americans are healthier and more confident than ever. And predictions that the best is yet to come for the "first universal nation."

The term is Wattenberg's alias for his country on the morrow of the Cold War. Having won it, the U.S. is ensconced—politically, militarily, and, most important, culturally—as "number one" everywhere, to use his language. Even when it comes to making and selling, he's not depressed by the competition. His figures say that the American birthrate is rising, but that Western Europe's is stuck at below replacement level and Japan's is below RL and tumbling. A high birthrate and large-scale immigration ensure American economic supremacy, because shrinking, aging populations can't compete or grow. Not that Wattenberg wants the readers of his book to relax—this is a pep talk. Far from pulling in its horns, as Pat Buchanan would have it do, victorious America should embrace its destiny anew. This means continuing to push for democracy worldwide, but not just any variety:

> Democracy American-style, a way of life as well as a political system, is not the same as, say, the pinched stultification of Swedish-style democracy. And in Eastern Europe today, it's said that the newly free countries should go Swedish. American taxpayers didn't spend trillions [on the Cold War] to create more Swedens. . . . As the last superpower we ought to try to shape evolution.

Wattenberg is sanguine that America can do this if it even half-tries, because culturally the U.S. is unrivaled, and "it's culture that counts." While the Japanese may make and sell all the VCRs, almost all the software is red-white-and-blue, and it's Kojak and Madonna who are members of the family on every continent. The fact that the culture exported by the U.S. to a fascinated and insatiable universe is mostly garbage doesn't matter. What's important is that the sounds and images convey the message of freedom, of infinite tolerance and opportunity, the opposite of stultification. The whole world seems to be getting the message. The historical proof of it was the outcome of the Cold War. The ongoing proof is, at one end of the continuum, all the foreign imitations of American schlock, and at the other, the "foreigners flocking to American universities because they know they are the best in the world."



So far, it sounds as if Wattenberg were a patriotic Pollyanna. Has the U.S., functioning as the Benign Empire, brought the heavenly Jerusalem down to earth? Not really. "America has some severe problems," he concedes. Among these are the level of ordinary schooling, which is awful, the agonies of a "black community [which] is clearly a troubled one," the deficit, and the Savings and Loan debacle. But for Wattenberg, none of these "severe problems" arises from any basic failure of the American way, nor does he doubt for a minute that America can get over them. The illiteracy produced in most high schools is the direct though not necessary consequence of an admirable decision to try to educate everyone, not just an elite "as in Europe and Japan."

The answer is to introduce higher standards and enforce discipline for everyone. The blacks are in trouble, but there are more and more black university graduates and a growing black middle class, which will give those left in the slums a model of healthier behavior. The deficit is shrinking. Crime? "There is still plenty to do." The people who looted the S&Ls "ought to go to jail." Drugs? Don't legalize them, fight them. Which is to say that, although Wattenberg knows that things aren't perfect at home, he counts on America to pull its socks up as it has done before, to live up to its "remarkable record of dealing with our own problems." Above all, he wants to dispel the stylish, dangerous, persistent cliché that there's something basically wrong, that America has lost its touch.

After a delay of only a few months, American bestsellers reach Israel, giving reviewers here a pretty good idea of the intellectual atmosphere Wattenberg and his allies have to contend with. "Decline" and "eclipse" seem to be the catchwords. Victory in the Cold War has spawned books claiming with figures and rhetoric that America's time has come and gone—the one that stayed popular longest was Paul Kennedy's *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*. The retirement of Ronald Reagan was followed by books deploring the effects of his revolution stateside—the best known is *The Politics of Rich and Poor*, by

Edward Norden is a writer living in Jerusalem.

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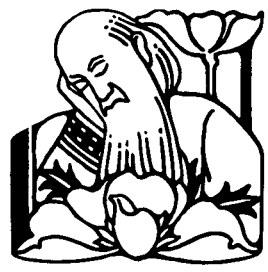
Kevin Phillips. That their books and others on how to compete with the Japanese should be bestsellers says something about America west of the Hudson. Indeed, if polls are to be trusted any more than statistics, the man-in-the-street is feeling lousy about his country. A Gallup poll last November discovered that 64 percent of Americans were "unhappy about how things are going." Likewise, a *Time*/CNN survey in October, asking the question, "How well do you think things are going in the U.S. these days?" got only 42 percent of a representative sample to reply "very well" or "fairly well," compared with 67 percent half a year before.

Possibly, if a fresh sounding were taken, the optimists would prevail again. Even if they did, these drastic ups and downs betray something feverish in the American psyche. Optimism and pessimism are always, of course, mostly in the mind. When Wattenberg and others who feel and hope as he does about America—one thinks of George Will in his most recent book *Suddenly*, Joseph Nye in *Bound to Lead*, and Alfred Balk in *The Myth of American Eclipse*—marshal their figures and rhetoric, they're trying to make history by persuading their fellow citizens to think, and therefore act, like winners, to explore again the power of positive thinking. No one, least of all an Israeli, can predict whether they'll be able to pull off this trick.

There are two possibilities, equally plausible as this review is being written, days before the U.N. ultimatum to Saddam comes due. Historians who are now no more than a glimmer in their parents' eyes will either agree that the American Century, an abbreviated one, started with Hiroshima and ended with the evacuation of the American Embassy in Saigon, soon after which Germany, Japan, and Iraq took their places in the sun, or that the empire, rallied by Reagan and mobilized by his successor, struck back masterfully. Wattenberg saw this back in August, and wrote, "If America acts firmly on the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait [then the U.S. will be able to tell him], 'Thanks Saddam, we needed that' [and can go ahead fashioning] a new world order."

Victory over Saddam would send America's stock soaring worldwide. It might also brace the American psyche, which, God knows, needs a tonic. As an ex-American who moved to Israel years ago, who still roots for the Pittsburgh Pirates and pays occasional visits to the Old Country, I find the streets of New York and Washington meaner with each visit. Worse than that, my old friends are ever bitterer and more fearful, quite in tune with the polls. The homeless, the strung-out, the menacing leap out at you. The American middle class, ever prey to the twin fears of getting mugged and getting fired, has long since adapted to them. The visitor finds America enormous, abundant as always, and wacky. Commercial TV is idiotic, noncommercial creepy, and no one under thirty-five can form a complete sentence. There doesn't seem to be any sort of ruling class anymore. Genuine decadence is gaining, innocence retreating. The coastal downtowns and Detroit have become black homelands, no-go zones reminiscent of certain parts of certain Middle Eastern cities—it would be interesting to know when the last time was that Wattenberg walked home from the AEI. A visitor who wishes America well and always despised Henry Adams has to wonder at Wattenberg's confidence.

It takes some reading between the lines in *The First Universal Nation*, and a look at an earlier, less happy book of his, to realize that Wattenberg has secret doubts himself. That book was *The Birth Dearth* (1987). Statistics then showed that Americans of European ancestry were having fewer than the 2.1 children per woman needed to replace themselves, while those of non-European ancestry, including blacks



Faith and Intelligence: Are They Compatible?

Among the well-educated the myth still circulates that religion is the preserve of the dim-witted, unlettered, and irrational. Yet recently *The New York Times Magazine* carried an article on the "return to religion" among intellectuals. From the Ivy League to Vanderbilt to Stanford, and among inquisitive people generally, there's an undeniable renewal of interest in the questions traditional religion raises and seeks to answer. This fascination is largely a result of the failures of secular substitutes for religion (such as positivism, hedonism, technological utopianism, egotism, Freudianism, and Marxism) to give abidingly satisfying answers to the truly significant puzzles in life: goodness, suffering, justice, love, death, and the meaning of it all.

The *Times* article discussed the NEW OXFORD REVIEW as part of this return to religion, and rightly so. We at the REVIEW are spearheading today's intellectual engagement with what Daniel Bell terms "the sacred." Among other things, we scrutinize the religious dimensions of the great events and issues of the past and present, and probe the wisdom offered not only by the Bible and Church fathers, but also by such diverse giants as St. Francis, Aquinas, Dante, Thomas More, Kierkegaard, Newman, Dostoyevsky, Chesterton, Bonhoeffer, Eliot, Silone, Maritain, Niebuhr, Solzhenitsyn, Dorothy Day, C.S. Lewis, Martin Luther King Jr., Flannery O'Connor, Simone Weil, Mother Teresa, Graham Greene, Malcolm Muggeridge, and Pope John Paul II.

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and immigrants from the Third World, were having more. This trend worried Wattenberg sufficiently to inspire an entire book. He feared that, while the melting pot could cope brilliantly with people from the area delimited by Ireland, Scandinavia, Russia, and Sicily, it was liable to crack if it had to assimilate the whole world in proportions such as would alter America's complexion from white to colored. *E pluribus unum*, yes, but only to a point. His solution? Propagandize white women to have more babies; make it a paying proposition, as in Sweden.

That was honest of him, indeed brave—he exposed himself to charges of racism. Wattenberg is less admirable, because less forthright, in his new book, when confronting what is basically the same subject. First, he reports that the children-per-woman figure in the U.S. is climbing, is up to 2.0, better than Western Europe's and much better than Japan's. He forgets, however, to break the American figure down into its white and non-white components. Instead, he plumps for more immigration, along lines a reader has to think about before understanding the likely demographic upshot. Far from being reassured by the reviving birth rate, Wattenberg is ready to try to use the laws, those on the books and those to be added, to keep America basically white. Illegal immigration, running into the millions and stemming mainly from the Third World, would be suppressed through enforcement of existing laws. Meanwhile, legal quotas would be increased and criteria for admission reformed so as to give preference to people with education, skills, and capital. The net effect? More new Americans from Europe, fewer from elsewhere.

About the first outcome, Wattenberg is explicit. The second he leaves to be inferred. In other words, he's pessimistic or realistic enough to believe that, while the first universal nation should go on exporting its ideas and software to every corner of the planet, it can't—nor should it—try to take in the huddled, mobile masses from Mexico to the Philippines to Bangladesh to Egypt, not if it wants to preserve a semblance of peace in its streets and remain number one. Interestingly enough, Congress has now rewritten the immigration laws roughly as Wattenberg suggested. The number of visas granted yearly has been raised from 500,000 to 700,000, with the stipulation that most of the added number be not for relatives of earlier immigrants, but for skilled or rich people. Not for the first time in its short history, America is trying to reconcile its pieties with its interests, its past with its future, its dreams with its nightmares. Meanwhile, laws or no laws, the Mexicans, Filipinos, and, yes, the Israelis keep seeping and sneaking in.

Israel is the other fantastic country in formation. If America's symbol is the Golden Door, the Jewish state's is the Ingathering of the Exiles, an ideal somewhat similar and altogether different. The first law passed by the first Knesset was the Law of Return, giving all Jews the right to enter Israel and get citizenship at any time. You have to be a very important parole-breaker, a Morton Sobell or Meyer Lansky, to be turned back. Otherwise, no matter what the burden, no matter what the pain, cost, or confusion, no matter what the economists or snobs say, all the Jews who knock on Israel's doors are welcomed. Today, this means a million or more refugee-immigrants from the disintegrating Soviet Union. The young and the old, the wicked and the good, the capitalists and the Stalinists, the healthy and the HIV-positive, are all being allowed to stream in on principle, and Ben Gurion airport is a throwback to Ellis Island in the old days.

Whether Israel will rise on this tide or drown in it is a hard question. What's clear is that most of these Jews are coming here only because the U.S. quota is filled. They're moving to Zion not because they're Zionists, but because it's the only place that will take them in. Similarly, the Israelis and others who continue to sneak into America do so not because it's better than ever, as native son Ben Wattenberg would have it, or because its prospects are great, but because, Saddam dead or alive, it's the only America around. □

THE COLONEL: THE LIFE AND WARS OF HENRY STIMSON, 1867-1950

Godfrey Hodgson/Alfred A. Knopf/402 pp. $24.95

Philip Terzian

The next time David S. Broder or R. W. Apple, Jr., or George F. Will, or any other of our politico-journalistic luminaries speculates in print about George Bush's "vision thing," it would be worthwhile to refer him to this volume. Although the British journalist Godfrey Hodgson's long-awaited life of Henry Stimson is infinitely less than any hopeful peruser has a right to expect, it does answer a question that has plagued the city of Washington for the past few years.

For in Colonel Stimson we find the American equivalent of the aristocratic principle: Of those to whom much has been given, much is expected, and so on. Our populist, democratic ideals prevent us from thinking comfortably in these terms, but there it is. No doubt the Colonel's famous speech to George Bush's graduating class at Andover—the one in which he said that he didn't pity the boys but envied them, since Providence had deposited them at a moment in time (1940) that gave them the responsibility of choosing between good and evil for the world—had the intended effect. Those who expect our President's ideology to be revealed in Cuomoesque orations or keynote addresses or soaring declarations need look no further than the scouting manual of the gentleman squire: duty, fidelity, noblesse oblige, impeccable manners, sword at the ready.

Indeed, Colonel Stimson seldom enunciated what might pass today for a constitutional creed or a declaration of political principle. Neither the Great Society nor the Century of the Common Man would have meant much to this Skull and Bonester. His was a sharp, constricted vision of an imperfect world in dangerous times, and an adolescent nation in need of guidance and some fundamental precepts. Just as the great mercantile enterprises of the Gilded Age had looked to young Stimson for protection and advice, so his countrymen sought old Stimson's guidance in their violent transition to superpower status. The colonel, who ran only once for elective office, did not necessarily pursue such prestige; it was his obligation to assume responsibility.

This particular tradition in our national political life did not begin with Henry Stimson, but for two generations of American foreign policy he personified it. Born in New York City two years after the end of the Civil War, Stimson died three months after the outbreak of fighting in Korea: from General Sherman to Dr. Oppenheimer in one lifetime. Stimson's mother died when he was eight years old, and his father, a banker who switched careers to medicine to diagnose and treat his ailing spouse, left his orphaned children in the care of their grandparents while he threw himself obsessively into his medical work. Henry Stimson was a sensitive, austere boy, inflexibly Victorian, a model student and devoted alumnus of the Phillips Academy (Andover), Yale College, and Harvard Law School. His childless marriage to a woman of slightly less exalted social rank distressed his father, but it was a successful, possibly even blissful, match that lasted half a century. He settled into the practice of corporate law in 1890s Manhattan, rode to hounds in the country, and, as he slowly descended into early middle age, came under the inevitable influence of Elihu Root, senior partner in his firm, and Theodore Roosevelt, the great white chief of his governing tribe.

To the career-minded among us, Stimson's life has a rare narrative grandeur. Once Elihu Root was brought into the McKinley Administration in 1899 to organize the bureaucratic chaos in the War Department after the victory over Spain, Stimson's star was destined to rise. As secretary of state, Root commended his younger partner to Theodore Roosevelt, who appointed Stimson U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York. There he assembled an elite brigade of younger lawyers, Felix Frankfurter among them, establishing a pattern often duplicated since. Next, he presided for two years over William Howard Taft's War Department, and, when conflict finally came for the United States in 1917, he spent several happy months as an aging artilleryman in France.

The Harding years found him practicing law, but in 1927, when Calvin Coolidge sought a mediator for Nicaragua's insurgency, he recruited Stimson. The arrangements negotiated under the thorn tree at Tipitapa—boycotted, of course, by Augusto Sandino—were characteristic of Stimson. Establishing his authority by plain strength of will, he was both cunning and wise, rigorous and deferential, scrupulous and candid; and he expected his gaudy players to observe those same standards. Presumably, his actions offended Latin tempers, but they did appeal to Yankee sentiment, and Coolidge of Vermont rewarded Stimson of New York with a proconsular plum: governor-general of the Philippines. Thus, on the basis of status and merit—and on that basis alone—he was Herbert Hoover's choice as secretary of state.

The two were destined to clash: Hoover portly, phlegmatic, cynical, deliberate, slow to anger, with a memory for slights; Stimson gaunt, impetuous, instinctive, idealistic, quick to react but swift to forgive. Out of the Japanese invasion of Manchuria (1931) came the Stimson Doctrine, the notion of withholding diplomatic recognition on grounds of principle. Stimsonism in

Philip Terzian is editor of the editorial pages at the Providence Journal.

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practice combined Wilsonian idealism with Rooseveltian action, and his indignation over Japanese perfidy was characteristically deep. The United States should not merely record its disapproval, he believed, but punish the transgressor. But Hoover, deep in the Depression and perceiving that his influence in Japanese-occupied north China was not likely to be great, saw little point in belaboring the issue.

Modern readers will appreciate the sixty-year-old debates on the efficacy of embargos and the varied definitions of American interest. But in their differences over Manchuria, Stimson and Hoover were a vision of the future: interventionism, isolationism; Bundles for Britain, America First.

Towards the end of his life, Stimson wrote a third-person autobiography (*On Active Service in Peace and War*) with the help of young McGeorge Bundy, the son of a longtime aide. Four years after Stimson's death, Richard N. Current issued a hostile study (*Secretary Stimson*), and in 1960, Elting E. Morison, editor of Theodore Roosevelt's letters, published an authorized life (*Turmoil and Tradition*). Godfrey Hodgson is a journalist, not a historian, and as far as I can tell, he has added nearly nothing to the substance of these earlier volumes. Moreover, he is a Briton, and what he might regard as an outsider's insights are often a stranger's misperceptions. His judgment of Stimson's character is slightly less deferential than Morison's; meanwhile, his view of Stimson's policies and opinions is very nearly identical to Current's. He breaks new ground only in reminding us constantly that Stimson and his mentors (Root, Taft, Leonard Wood) had politically incorrect ideas on race.

No one can dispute that Elihu Root held views about Asians that no modern American statesman would utter even in private. And Stimson's rationale for the internment of Japanese-Americans in 1942 seems largely unconvincing fifty years later. But so what? I should imagine that even Godfrey Hodgson's sensibilities have evolved in the course of decades, and most of the offenders in this volume were born when slavery was still extant. It is perhaps not coincidental that Hodgson has formed many of his conclusions on the basis of conversations with such contemporary nabobs as the Bundy brothers (McGeorge and William) and the late Kingman Brewster. The echoes of those comfortable Anglo-American chats sound heavily in these pages. The assertion that Stimson was some kind of pioneer New Frontiersman—a *Herald Tribune* Republican whose faith has been betrayed in our Bush/Reaganite times—is wholly unpersuasive, thoroughly predictable, and patently wrong.

The distance of decades gives Hodgson the freedom to psychoanalyze his dead subject. Stimson, to be sure, is eligible for some sessions on the couch: the motherless boy with the cold, distant father; the apparent sterility, possibly caused by mumps; the temper; the nervous quirks and ailments; the lifelong need for strenuous physical exercise; the rigid adherence to his gentleman's code; the impersonal diaries, devoid of reflections on the arts or the flesh. But reticence is not always a means of concealing things, and orphans sometimes avoid psychic wounds. It is entirely possible that Stimson's marriage influenced his public behavior, or vice versa, but Hodgson's speculations are obvious and simplistic, and his only living witnesses knew Stimson in old age, when History had already wrapped him like a shroud.

In the summer of 1940, when France capitulated and Dunkirk fell, Justice Felix Frankfurter swung into action. Franklin Roosevelt had been anxious to convey some message to Britain *and* Hitler with symbolic appointments in his peacetime cabinet; he was also concerned about the Republican National Convention opening in Philadelphia. Stimson, who had known FDR socially and kept in friendly contact throughout the New Deal, was the best-known Republican interventionist in America. The elopement of Stimson and Roosevelt, engineered by Frankfurter, outraged the Republicans but impressed the Europeans: it was, during a congressionally mandated neutrality, the best means Roosevelt had to take sides and prepare America to fight. Stimson in the War Department, and Frank Knox in the Navy Department, were more than mere figureheads; but, by virtue of their age and the demands of global warfare, they were destined to ratify, not initiate, U.S. policies.

By the time Stimson presided over the decision to use the atomic bomb against the Japanese, he was 78 years old, weary, distracted, and very nearly worn out. Yet it must be said that the process by which he defined the nuclear problem—the disconcerting meeting of human morality and national obligation—was exactly the kind of service that Stimson rendered best, and holds up rather well. No American statesman better understood military necessity, principled action, the need to arrive at a timely consensus. This was, as he saw it, the dread responsibility for which he had been trained. Such burdens were unwelcome, but always assumed—and the model of service that was Henry Stimson's life still serves as the ideal forty years after his death. □

THE ILIAD

Translated by Robert Fagles/Viking/683 pp. $35

Susan Kristol

"Of all books extant in all kinds, Homer is the first and best." Thus begins George Chapman's "Preface to the Reader" in his 1616 translation of the *Iliad*. The publication of a new translation by Robert Fagles gives us an occasion to return to a poem whose portrayal of men at war some 3,000 years ago still has power to move us. Our country recruits soldiers with the slogan, "Be all that you can be. You can do it in the Army." The sentiment is true in a deeper sense for the fighters of the *Iliad*, for whom the battlefield was *the* place to win glory through the exercise of their heroic capacities. The story of Achilles reveals the tension between the desire for glory and the possibility of friendship. The story of Hector reveals the difficulty of pursuing glory while at the same time loving one's family. Both men choose a glorious death. Their recompense is that we are still reading about them today.

Reading a familiar masterpiece in a new translation can have impressive results. In 1816, the young John Keats stayed up till dawn with Charles Cowden Clarke, reading passages from Chapman's book. By ten o'clock that same morning, Keats had delivered to his friend his now-famous sonnet, "On First Looking Into Chapman's Homer," which tells of his astonishment at discovering the greatness of Homer, revealed to him only by this translation:

Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne;
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken. . . .

When we ourselves look into Chapman's Homer, with its unwieldy couplets, we may have some trouble understanding what all the fuss was about:

Achilles' banefull wrath resound, O Goddess, that impos'd
Infinite sorrows on the Greeks, and many brave souls los'd
From breasts heroique; sent them far to that invisible cave
That no light comforts; and their limbs to dogs and vultures gave.

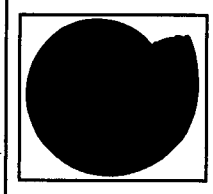
But Chapman enabled Keats, who did not know Greek, to see the *Iliad* through a different lens from that of the polished couplets of Alexander Pope:

Achilles' wrath, to Greece the direful spring
Of woes unnumber'd, heavenly goddess, sing!
That wrath which hurl'd to Pluto's gloomy reign
The souls of mighty chiefs untimely slain;
Whose limbs unburied on the naked shore,
Devouring dogs and hungry vultures tore.

Pope's *Iliad* (1715-1720) had an enormous impact on English literature; in the judgment of Samuel Johnson, "His version may be said to have turned the English tongue. . . . Such a series of lines so elaborately corrected, and so sweetly modulated, took possession of the publick ear." But, as English poetry has abandoned rhyme and meter, translators have tried other approaches to

Susan Kristol is a classicist living in McLean, Virginia.

THE PURPOSE OF IT ALL



BY

STANLEY L. JAKI

What is the purpose of it all?

Is an abiding sense of purpose assured by a scientific and technological progress? Is biological evolution a carrier of purpose? What is the ultimate purpose of economic prosperity?

An answer to these questions is offered in this book, the expanded version of eight lectures the author delivered in Oxford in November 1989.

Professor Jaki is a member of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and a winner of the Templeton Prize.

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convey the experience of reading Homer's epic.

The reigning versions of the *Iliad* in recent years have been those of Richmond Lattimore (1951) and poet/journalist Robert Fitzgerald (1974). Each of these translations achieves one type of "faithfulness" to the original poem, but neither is completely satisfactory. Lattimore translates the original Greek with almost word-for-word accuracy, but his lines are so ponderous that reading his book can seem a Herculean task. Fitzgerald's verses move quickly, like those of Homer, but his translation is too free and his diction a hodgepodge of archaisms and soldierly slang.

Given the imperfections of these two translations, Robert Fagles's attempt at a new *Iliad* is welcome. But the results are mixed. Fagles, a professor of comparative literature at Princeton, and his collaborator, the classicist Bernard Knox, have made this volume user-friendly. Helpful features include a lengthy and informative introduction by Knox, maps, endnotes, and a guide to pronunciation. Proper names are Anglicized.

Fagles is more faithful to the original text and more consistent in his diction than Fitzgerald, and metrically more readable than Lattimore. Two examples illustrate the differences. First, Sarpedon's address to his comrade Glaucus:

"Dear Glaukos, you are a fighter among men." (Lattimore)

"Glaukos, old man, old war-dog . . ." (Fitzgerald)

"Glaucus—
oh dear friend, dear fighter, soldier's soldier!" (Fagles)

Second, Glaucus' reaction:

But when he heard the voice a hard sorrow came upon Glaukos,
and the heart was stirred within him, and he could not defend Sarpedon. (Lattimore)

But bitter anguish at Sarpedon's voice
had come to Glaukos, and his heart despaired
because he had not helped his friend. (Fitzgerald)

But grief came over Glaucus, hearing his comrade's call.
His heart was racing—what could he do to help him? (Fagles)

In these two passages, Lattimore's version is best at reproducing the Greek text. Fitzgerald combines lofty poetic diction with unconvincing slang ("old war-dog"!). Fagles's words are simpler and more colloquial, but he adds the phrase "dear fighter" and makes the final clause into a question where there is none in the Greek.

In many places, however, Fagles provides a more vivid translation than his predecessors without being unfaithful to the Greek text. Consider the passage in Book 19 where Achilles, having just received a set of armor from the gods, summons his men. Fagles writes: "But brilliant Achilles strode along the surf." Compare this with Lattimore's less exciting line: "But he, brilliant Achilles, walked along by the seashore." Fitzgerald's attempt is even flatter: "And Prince Achilleus/passed along the surf-line."

Similarly, when Achilles returns to the war, Fagles is equal to the drama of the occasion:

A high stabbing cry—
and out in the front ranks he drove his plunging stallions.

Lattimore's words are so faithful to the original that they verge on the unintelligible:

He spoke, and shouting held on in the foremost his single-foot horses.

Fitzgerald's rendition is unexciting and marred by an awkward line division:

And with a shout he drove his team
of trim-hooved horses into the front line.

Fagles gives us a fast *Iliad*. The battle scenes are exhilarating, the scenes between the gods delightfully frivolous, as when Zeus praises the "marvelous ankles" of one of his former mistresses, turning an ornamental epithet into an insult to his own wife. And the invective is memorable: "Die and be damned for all I care!" "You, you dog-face!" "What a worthless, burnt-out coward I'd be called!" "Bitch that I am, vicious, scheming—horror to freeze the heart!"

But something is missing. When we turn to the loftier speeches, the famous exchanges between warriors or family members, we feel keenly the lack of a grand style, a formal and weighty discourse. This is undoubtedly the price we pay for Fagles's modern diction, diction that Fagles defends as "answering to the ways we read today."

Indeed, one might almost say that Fagles's translation too easily answers to the ways we *think* today. Modernity is uncomfortable with grandeur, and in this translation we may at times discern a modern democratic reluctance to acknowledge it. For example, in Books 6 and 11, warriors use identical language to describe the precepts of heroism given by fathers to sons. The line might almost serve as the motto of aristocracy:

to do none but great feats, to be distinguished
above the rest. . . . (Fitzgerald)

or:

To be always best in battle and pre-eminent beyond all others (Lattimore)

Fagles's rendition of this line, by adding the words "my boy," undercuts the loftiness of the sentiment, as though implying that only old fogeys could speak this way:

"Always be the best, my boy, the bravest, and hold your head up high above the others."

In Hector's tender farewell to his wife:

"I've learned it all too well. To stand up bravely,
always to fight in the front ranks of Trojan soldiers,
winning my father great glory, glory for myself."

the un-Homeric "all too" lends a cynical note to the description of war and heroism. When Hector sees that the gods have deserted him and death approaches, Fagles's translation makes his words seem more resigned than they need be:

"So now I meet my doom. Well let me die. . . ."

How different is this same passage in Pope:

" . . . Then welcome fate!
'Tis true I perish, yet I perish great!"

Perhaps the fault lies not in the translator but in ourselves, a generation that shies away from nobility. Fagles has given us a translation appropriate to an unheroic age. It tastes great, but it's less filling. □

IN THE TIME OF THE TYRANTS: PANAMA, 1968-1990

R. M. Koster and Guillermo Sánchez/W. W. Norton/430 pp. $22.95

Christopher Caldwell

This is not another "Noriega book" but an extraordinary history of Panama from the coup that overthrew the democratically elected government of Arnulfo Arias in October 1968 to the U.S. invasion in December 1989. On the eve of the coup, Panama was an extremely fortunate country: peaceful, stable, cosmopolitan, democratic, with a free press and an economy growing at eight percent a year. The generals who bled it over two decades of dictatorship—Boris Martínez, Omar Torrijos, Rubén Darío Paredes, and Manuel Antonio Noriega—were a shocking departure.

The story of the dictatorship has been told before. The story of how completely it turned a unique and civilized American nation into a shoddy excuse for a country has not. Sánchez, novelist and author of the "En Pocas Palabras" column in the Panama City daily *La Prensa*, is the most popular and informative political columnist in the country. Koster, a Brooklyn-born novelist who has lived in Panama for over three decades, has been involved in human rights monitoring and Democratic party politics in the United States.

The book arose from two articles, one on the torture and beheading of Noriega foe Hugo Spadafora Franco, the other on the revelations of Col. Roberto Díaz Herrera, a disgruntled fellow-thug of Noriega. Signed by Sánchez but written largely by Koster, they were published in *Harper's* in 1987 and 1988. By then, Sánchez's coverage of the Spadafora killing that had got him into big trouble, and he was living in exile in Miami.

Actually, everyone at *La Prensa* was in big trouble. The paper had been founded by Roberto Eisenmann in 1980, scion of an old Panamanian Jewish family. Its existence owed much to Republicans in the U.S. Senate, who argued in the late 1970s that, if Panama were to take over the Canal, it ought to have some of the trappings of liberty—a free press, for example. Needless to say, from the moment of its founding, *La Prensa* was under attack. In 1979, one of its left-leaning journalists, Miguel Antonio Bernal, was beaten by agents of the Panama Defense Forces (PDF) until he hemorrhaged. In 1981, plain-clothes goons broke into the plant and destroyed all the typewriters and smashed all the windows. In 1982, they closed the paper, booby-trapped the pressworks, and poured acid into the computers.

Christopher Caldwell is assistant managing editor of The American Spectator.

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By 1985 Panama had in place a "calumny law" which mandated that anyone charged with bringing disrespect on the PDF could be jailed for five years without trial. Sánchez, tipped off by a neighbor that the PDF were waiting to arrest him at his house, fled and became the first person to take refuge in the Papal *nunciatura*, where a far more famous fugitive would repair some four years later. The charges were dropped, but he was charged again a few weeks later and sent to La Modelo prison in Panama City:

> Everyone in the cell had murdered someone . . . a man who'd been reading a newspaper lifted his gaze and said, "He's Sánchez Borbón. He writes 'En Pocas Palabras.' I read it whenever I get the chance." . . . Then another came up, a man in a cap, and began explaining his extraordinary sexual gifts, which were mainly going to waste now with his caging. Another offered Sánchez the services of his personal catamite, and grew furious when Sánchez refused the offer. Across the aisle was La Galera de los Locos (the Gallery of the Madmen)—as if Sánchez's cellmates didn't qualify—where crazies sang and begged and shouted insults. Ceaselessly. Other prisoners taunted them to see their lunacies, or had them commit perversions for a piece of bread or cigarette in reward. . . .
>
> Then Sánchez's self-styled protector, whom Sánchez didn't know whether to trust or not (but who, he learned later, was used by the prison guards for their filthiest errands), rummaged in a corner of his cell and in his pockets, and at once there appeared four or five little straws and a small paper plate and on it a mound of cocaine, which his cellmates partook of in quick snorts. It was the first time Sánchez had witnessed that sort of ritual. Later he learned what it signified in La Modelo. It was a preparation for a gang rape.

All the Noriega stories are here: his acne, which left his face looking "like the landscape at Verdun"; his collection of ceramic toads; his bisexuality; his rape and near-murder of a Peruvian prostitute in the late 1950s; his CIA connections and his role as Castro's double agent therein; his opening of the $5 million cocaine refinery in Darién province and the outrage of the Medellín cartel when he had to arrest a few of their operatives to impress the DEA. Sánchez and Koster are fairly certain that he organized the abduction and murder of liberation theologist Father Héctor Gallego in 1971, and that Noriega killed him personally, by pushing him out of a helicopter while he was still alive. They do not believe Noriega was responsible for the plane accident that killed Torrijos in 1981. Nor was the CIA or Castro, as some have alleged. Those who favor the assassination theory point to the fact that the pattern of debris found at the crash site points to a mid-air explosion, not a crash. Sánchez and Koster, while admitting room for speculation, lean towards the most common explanation: that the plane simply hit a mountain during a thunderstorm.

The authors do a meticulous job of accounting, and come up with an estimate of Noriega's net worth that is far higher than even the most astronomical figures bandied about by the Panamanian opposition: no less than $772 million and probably closer to $1 billion. This is great journalistic legwork, which other journalists have been inexplicably unwilling to do: last December, for example, *USA Today* bragged that an article it had published by one Sam Meddis "demonstrates, for the first time, that Noriega had amassed a fortune of at least $31.5 million." Way to dig, guys.

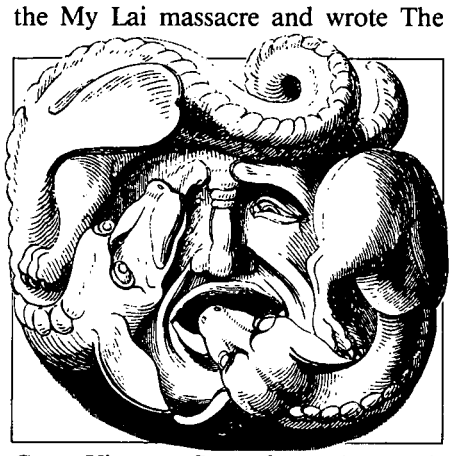
What moderate North Americans will find newest in this book is its reappraisal of the Torrijos "revolution," a hazily defined program of agrarian reform, deep foreign borrowing, and top-down labor organization, couched in the dulcet rhetoric of Torrijos, which titillated liberals from the Beltway to the Bundestag: "I do not wish to enter history. I wish to enter the Canal Zone." "What people on earth puts up with the humiliation of a foreign flag nailed through its heart?" Torrijos, as much the villain of this work as Noriega, is depicted as a whoremonger and boozebag of limited intellect and vision, lazy, a liar, a drug smuggler, and a coward of the worst ilk.

The authors have a weakness for a particularly Latin American type of relentless caricature; North American readers will feel like they're in the middle of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* or a Latin American novel not unlike some of Koster's own, in which two prime ministers can be overthrown in a single afternoon, and dictators are executed by being thrown to sharks. Koster and Sánchez mention with irrepressible glee that the only war wounds suffered by the Maximum Leader were in the gluteus maximus: a few shotgun pellets in the buttocks sustained while fleeing a handful of ill-armed student protesters in Veraguas province in 1959. During the 1968 coup, Torrijos was so frightened of advancing on *guardia* headquarters that his friend, mafioso and future president Demetrio "Jimmy" Lakas, had to pull a gun on him to keep him from fleeing to the safety of the Canal Zone.

Having gone through enough suffering in their opposition to Torrijos and Noriega to fill up a month-long PEN conference, Koster and Sánchez brook no appeasers. An unnamed writer, certainly National Public Radio's John Dinges, who has questioned their description of the torture and killing of Spadafora, is "either an apologist for General Noriega or poorly informed or both." This seems fair, given that Dinges saw fit in his book to describe Torrijos's cousin Roberto Díaz Herrera —by the most charitable estimate a crank and a sadist—as "the sharpest political mind in the Panama Defense Forces." But Graham Greene also spoke highly of Díaz in *Getting to Know the General*, his "Torrijos memoir" in which Torrijos appears for a total of about five pages. According to Koster and Sánchez:

> . . . Graham Greene and Gabriel Garcia Marquez . . . as was their right, were on the left. Both despised the United States of America. Both, in their confusion, believed Torrijos's fake revolution authentic and supposed him a painful thorn in Uncle Sam's paw. Greene, who knew but a very few words of Spanish, was brought to Panama at the people's expense and filled like a sausage with foolishness by José de Jesus Martínez—to the point where he saw Torrijos as a Graham Greene character. In short, Greene took the precaution of fooling himself before going on to fool others in the *New York Review of Books.*

Much of the writing that came out of the Panama crisis was excellent, though. Since Seymour Hersh stumbled upon the My Lai massacre and wrote The



Great Vietnam Story from New York City,[1] major foreign correspondence has come largely from U.S. government sources. Two Panama books that rely heavily on the method have already been published: the excellent *Divorcing the Dictator* by the *Wall Street Journal*'s Frederick Kempe, and *Our Man in Panama* by NPR's Dinges. The problem with this kind of writing—ignoring that those who practice it tend to write in the same white-paperese as their sources—is that Libya and Cuba do not have the Freedom of Information Act, and the Medellín cartel is not the world's most talkative multinational when it comes to sharing trade secrets. There is thus a tendency to exaggerate grotesquely the U.S. role in any foreign conflict.

In fact, the CIA and other agencies are generally less concerned about covering up their involvement than in covering up their incompetence. That is why so little news appeared about the Cuban soldiers killed in the Canal Zone after attacks on U.S. installations in March and April 1988 and during the December 1989 invasion. That is why one heard so little about the large-scale involvement of Torrijos's brother Moncho (who died last December) in heroin smuggling in the late seventies, and about the Taiwanese who were being allowed to enter Panama at $10,000 a crack in the late eighties. Further, as David Brock has been the only American writer to point out, in an article that appeared in *Commentary* last June, "Noriega's rise in the middle-1970s was not a function of CIA complicity but rather coincided with the CIA's decline." Had certain figures in the Nixon Administration had their way, it would have been Noriega, not Father Gallego and others, who got "immobilized." Despite the fact that Sánchez is a *soi-disant* "born-again Marxist" and Koster a Democrat, both wholeheartedly supported the December 1989 U.S. invasion, although they add that "if the annals of human stupidity ever come to be written, the CIA's involvement with Manuel Noriega will surely figure prominently in them."

The authors put most of the blame on a colorful pantheon of Isthmian villains, and keep anti-American sentiment in check to the extent that one begins to worry that they're being unfair to Panama. Are they too hard on Torrijos, for example? Their assertion that his mass support was largely factitious has been borne out by the way Panamanians have dropped him like a hot potato since Operation Just Cause: Torrijos International Airport was given back its old name—Tocúmen—faster than you can say *golpe*. The Parque Omar is now a conspicuously nameless adjunct to the Parque Porras. And the house that Graham Greene visited (along with a veritable battalion of mistresses), which was rechristened the Casa de Recuerdos ("House of Memories") after Torrijos's death, was among the first buildings to be looted in the days following the invasion. The vandals got everything—the old uniforms, the Canal treaty documents, the machine guns given as presents by Fidel. Then they burned the place to the ground.

But Sánchez and Koster never adequately explain how someone of the intelligence and honesty of Hugo Spadafora could be such a wholehearted *torrijista*, and they minimize Torrijos's role in the Canal treaties. The United States is lucky it had Torrijos, and very

[1] Hersh also wrote The Great Panama Story, which appeared in the *New York Times* on June 12, 1986, detailing Noriega's drug and arms trafficking, his growing personal fortune, and his involvement with the CIA and the intelligence agencies of other countries. It has proved essentially true in all its details, and all articles written on Noriega since can be seen as mere embellishments on Hersh's central revelations. As such, it marks a cut-off point after which any U.S. defense of its appeasement of Noriega as being based on ignorance or naiveté can be dismissed as cynical or dishonest.

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lucky it "gave away the Canal." It was a strange coincidence that brought together a feckless President and a dictator who looks in retrospect like the only person who could have galvanized international support in turning the Canal treaties into an issue of imperialism—for, even if the Torrijos revolution was bogus, the international upshot of it was not. Koster and Sánchez are probably correct that keeping the Canal was not in the interests of the United States, but wrong that North Americans would eventually have recognized as much. If Carter had not given the Canal away, it would not have been given away at all.

All it will take for a complete history of Panama since 1968 to be written will be a full confession by Manuel Antonio Noriega, the files of several dozen intelligence agencies, the ledgers of organized crime syndicates from Tripoli to Taipei, and the resurrection of Omar Torrijos, Hugo Spadafora, and Father Gallego. Until that happens, it will be hard to find a better account of Panama's twenty-one years in purgatory than this brave, intelligent, and honest book. □

THE HIDDEN NATIONS: THE PEOPLE CHALLENGE THE SOVIET UNION
Nadia Diuk and Adrian Karatnycky/William Morrow/284 pp. $22.95

SOVIET DISUNION: A HISTORY OF THE NATIONALITIES PROBLEM IN THE USSR
Bohdan Nahaylo and Victor Swoboda
The Free Press/432 pp. $29.95

Peter Keresztes

Mikhail Gorbachev was eating lunch in the Kremlin the day Lithuania's president, Vytautas Landsbergis, phoned to denounce the massacre of civilians in Vilnius by Soviet troops. The Soviet premier, according to news reports from Lithuania, either declined or was not allowed to take the call. Although Gorbachev later claimed the decision to open fire was made without his knowledge, he nonetheless endorsed the crackdown.

As Adrian Karatnycky wrote in these pages last month, "Something has to give," and so it has: there can no longer be any doubt as to which way Gorbachev is leaning on the nationality question. His use of force to keep the evil empire intact amounts to a direct attack against its constituent nations. In the long run, determination, time, and demographics will favor the parts over the whole.

In *The Hidden Nations*, Karatnycky and his wife Nadia Diuk suggest three possible outcomes: the replacement of glasnost and perestroika with Brezhnev-style neo-Stalinism; the collapse of the USSR into independent nation-states; or the establishment of a confederation or commonwealth—"a low-budget Eurasian version of the European Community." The last the authors see as a possible "transitional phase" toward full sovereignty for the republics.

Bohdan Nahaylo and Victor Swoboda add a fourth alternative: the "genuine federalization or 'Yugoslavization' of the USSR." While such a federalization is behind the Union treaty now being drafted, it is hardly a long-term solution. As the book observes, "genuine democratization and the preservation of empire, however disguised, are incompatible."

Both works debunk numerous myths about Soviet nationality policy. Western conservatives, for instance, cherish the notion that if only the USSR adopted an efficient market economy, prosperity would make happy capitalists of disgruntled separatists. Such thinking is merely that of Americans projecting "their own domestic arrangements onto a Soviet setting," as Diuk and Karatnycky put it. "The call of the people is for something far more profound than, simply, the necessary amelioration of economic injustices."

Similarly trapped are Gorbachev's liberal admirers, who fret that his failure would reverse the human rights progress the country had been making until recently. Their logic ignores Gorbachev's arbitrary power to roll back the rights of individuals in the interest of the empire. As dissident Vladimir Bukovsky said in a statement from prison in 1975, human rights are inseparable from national rights. Bukovsky declared his solidarity with the non-Russian majority among Soviet political prisoners, concluding, as Nahaylo and Swoboda recount, "that if those who were imprisoned for defending the rights of their nations were 'nationalists,' then he too was one, 'for democracy means freedom both for individuals and for separate nations.' "

No less pernicious is the theory that the Soviet system's disintegration, in Gorbachev's words, "is fraught with the destabilization of the political situation in Europe and the world." The notion overlooks that such conjurings of a global catastrophe merely exploit a fundamental confusion regarding nationalism in today's Soviet Union. National movements in non-Russian republics, Diuk and Karatnycky write, "have much in common with the liberal nationalism that swept Europe in 1848 and little in common with the revanchism, imperialism, and fascism that provided the coloration of European nationalisms of the 1920s and 1930s."

The Hidden Nations starts off with a brief, comprehensive survey of the historical, cultural, and economic coercion by the "master" Russians of the fourteen "imprisoned" nations and eighty-seven other large and small ethnic groups. The authors then take a detailed look at each major region of the Soviet empire: the Ukraine, the Baltics, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Russia itself. Diuk, a historian who works as an East European specialist at the National Endowment for Democracy, and Karatnycky, research director for the AFL-CIO Department of International Affairs, based much of their book on travels throughout the Soviet Union. The result is top-flight journalism enriched with anecdotes, interviews, and firsthand observations.

In Latvia they encountered Eduard Berklavs, a disillusioned former Communist, more accurately a "national Communist," who wound up in Siberia for his efforts to slow the influx of Russians into his country. "They branded me a 'bourgeois nationalist'—me! a son of poor workers who had never owned anything in his life." Poor Berklavs. He thought the Kremlin cared more for ideology than for empire.

In the Ukraine the authors found that four years after Chernobyl more than half the children in an area stretching as far as fifty-six miles from the reactor suffer from thyroid disorders. Diuk and Karatnycky take the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the three major U.S. television networks to task for ignoring "the national dimension of the catastrophe."

In the Caucasus, where ferment in 1987 awakened some in the West to the fact that the USSR was far from a harmonious family of nations, the authors met the likes of Zviad Gamsakhurdia, a Georgian Helsinki monitor who is convinced that many interethnic conflicts are orchestrated from Moscow as a way of exercising its "imperial policy," an assessment corroborated by Soviet defense minister Dmitri Yazov, who admitted that the military crackdown in the Armenian-Azerbaijani dispute in Baku in January 1990 took place to preempt Azerbaijani nationalists from taking over the republic's government.

The Hidden Nations puts to rest another myth—that a "superior" proconsul is necessary to keep the *chernozhopy* ("black-asses," the Russian pejorative for Armenians and Azerbaijanis) from butchering one another. Anti-Armenian pogroms in Baku had already subsided by the time martial law was introduced, according to leaders of the Azerbaijani Popular Front. More significantly, the Armenians, disillusioned with Moscow's maneuverings, negotiated directly with the Azerbaijanis and achieved a temporary truce and agreements in principle on other issues.

In Central Asia, where the rapidly growing Muslim and Turkish populations are beginning to realize that they can provide a powerful counterbalance to pan-Slavism, the authors are struck by a Tashkent statue of Karl Marx, bearing "more resemblance to Genghis Khan than to a German of Jewish extraction." Exploited by the cotton monoculture forced on the region, the indigenous population is allowed to work only in the countryside, while Russian factory workers and bureaucrats occupy the dismal cities. For the Central Asians it adds up to a socialist apartheid. "It's like being an immigrant in your own country," one Uzbek says.

The "Elder Brother"—the Russians, whom the authors describe as "the most relentlessly and consistently successful expansionist ethnic group in history"—is indeed *primus inter pares*. But Russians now constitute only about half of the Soviet population of 285 million, and are losing ground to the other, more fecund peoples, especially in Central Asia. There is a growing sense among Russians of being "under siege."

The Russian nationalists' complaint, according to Diuk and Karatnycky, is that it was their nation which suffered the most from the policies of "a Russian-speaking, ethnically Russian, but fundamentally totalitarian antinational ruling elite." The price of empire, they feel, was a loss of the Russians' "own spiritual roots and national identity."

This quest for identity explains the rise of the Russian ultranationalist group Pamyat, with its simple solutions, xenophobia, conspiracy theories, anti-democratism, and anti-Semitism. Andrei Fadin, a leader in the Club for Democratic Perestroika, says that, because dissolution of the empire would affect 25 million Russians who live in the non-Russian republics, he can't see the Russians allowing secessions. "The Russian psyche is not prepared to accept minority status."

Diuk and Karatnycky concede, on the other hand, that Boris Yeltsin's narrow victory as president of the Russian Federation may be a "sign of the beginnings of a Russian retreat from the empire." In January, Yeltsin wasted no time in

Peter Keresztes is an American journalist based in Brussels.

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denouncing the Vilnius crackdown and paying a personal visit to Latvia. He has plenty of Russian supporters in Moscow and Leningrad, who have taken to the streets in solidarity with the Balts.

One can assume, then, that the future will bear some resemblance to the turbulent past. *Soviet Disunion* is a lucid account of that history by Bohdan Nahaylo, a British-born writer and broadcaster on Soviet Affairs who is a senior research analyst for Radio Liberty in Munich, and Victor Swoboda, honorary research fellow at the School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies in the University of London. The book chronicles from the days of Lenin the fierce fight for survival by the Soviet Union's non-Russian nations in face of a relentless consolidation effort. Lenin himself, aware that force would never suffice in holding the empire together, engineered concessions for non-Russians, though he didn't shrink from using the Red Army to capture Baku in 1920 for its oil deposits. From the outset, his Bolshevik followers mixed guile with fire to deny the aspirations to autonomy of peoples in Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Stalin, determined to consolidate the empire once and for all, shot, starved, and deported potential "independentists." He shipped off peoples most Westerners have never heard of—Kalmyks, Karachai, Balkars, Chechens, Ingushi, and Meshkhetians—like bulk commodities from a warehouse. On May 16, 1944, for instance, a quarter of a million Crimean Tatars were packed into railway oil tankers and wagons for transport to Central Asia; 46 percent died en route. By 1968, their survivors and descendants had collected over 3 million signatures in support of their right to return to Crimea.

Stalin and each of his successors underestimated the survival instincts of the "hidden" nations. Non-Russians have resisted Russification and political encroachments on their cultures. As of 1970, for instance, half of non-Russians and three out of four Central Asians couldn't communicate in Russian. Ukrainian and Baltic guerrillas remained active until 1952-53; Georgian independentists rioted in 1956; Armenian masses demonstrated in 1965; and Crimean Tatars resorted to self-immolation to dramatize their grievances in 1978.

The "nationalist genie" supposedly unflasked by Gorbachev's glasnost has always been on the loose. All previous attempts to entrap it have failed. The tanks and troops in the Baltics will be no more successful, except in crushing the ultimate myth that Mikhail Gorbachev was somehow different from his predecessors. □

THE JAPAN THAT CAN SAY NO

Shintaro Ishihara/Simon and Schuster/158 pp. $18.95

Peter Hannaford

Shortly after this book appeared in Japan, the U.S. Department of Defense, alarmed by its rhetoric, ordered a translation. Although the translation was a poor one and sections were omitted, it soon found its way through many a Washington photocopier and produced an outcry from assorted politicians. Author Shintaro Ishihara has given us an updated English-language edition, minus a section written by Sony chairman Akio Morita. Ishihara is a popular novelist, ocean-racing yachtsman, and member of the Diet. A one-time cabinet minister and candidate for his party's presidency (which would have made him premier), he has long believed in speaking his mind, and prizes this quality in Americans. He concedes that he is thought "a bull in the china shop" by many in Japan. Ishihara is like the legendary fellow who hit the mule with a two-by-four "to get his attention." He hits his American readers with several two-by-fours, then discusses his supporting arguments reasonably and, in the final analysis, sympathetically.

It bothers Ishihara greatly that, nearly half a century after the end of World War II, Japan is still playing yes-man to the United States, particularly on defense and foreign policy. When he speculates about the possibility of Japan using its prodigious microchip output to supply not the U.S., but, say, the USSR, he is hitting us with the two-by-four. The same goes for his assertion that we Americans single out Japan for criticism—just as we dropped atom bombs on it—because of our inherent racism. He says that "American racism stems from pride in cultural superiority," and has raised this point with a number of Americans, all of whom were uncomfortable talking about it. One can argue that it is suspicion about a very different culture, rather than racism, that fuels some American criticism of Japan. And, while Ishihara does not take note of Japan's notorious ethnocentrism, he does say, "I'm not suggesting Japanese are without fault. Discrimination is still widespread in Japan." Nonetheless, his urging that we frankly confront and discuss the basis of our differences is beyond argument.

Time and time again Ishihara returns to the controversy surrounding the FSX fighter aircraft, which could have demonstrated Japan's ability to stand on its own while applying its advanced technology to an aircraft uniquely designed for homeland defense. Instead, the U.S. insisted on "co-production" and one-sided technology transfer arrangements, which Ishihara regards as lingering symptoms of Japan's post-World War II subservience.

Critics often describe Ishihara as "nationalistic," raising the specter of past Japanese militarism. A careful reading of his views yields a different picture. He says, "Without nationalism—a strong sense of roots and identity—there cannot be internationalism, only a shallow cosmopolitanism." He is really speaking to an underlying concern that young Japanese are in danger of losing their culture, heritage, and values if they mistake the superficial allure of Western music, fashion, and so on for a substitute.

More than a few American policymakers have, in recent years, called on Japan to take on a greater share of the world's burdens, as befits a great economic power. That, of course, is what Ishihara is urging his country to do. He recognizes that "Americans are upset, frustrated and worried about their country," but he cautions us not to use Japan as a scapegoat for our own problems. When the Rockefeller Group sold Rockefeller Center to Mitsubishi, they had already put the property on the market to seventeen Japanese firms! It took two to tango. Washington's deliberate policy of reducing the dollar against the yen in 1985—intended to reduce the trade deficit by making U.S. exports more competitive—led to the increased Japanese interest in U.S. properties.

Ishihara cites familiar cause-and-effect arguments for the declining competitiveness of U.S. companies, but he also lists remedies in the form of two *American* studies: "Made in America: Regaining the Productive Edge," by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1989); and "Global Competition: The New Reality," by the President's Commission on Industrial Competitiveness. To sweeten the mix, Ishihara says that he and "fifteen like-minded politicians who want U.S. industry to regain its competitive edge" developed a list of suggestions he thinks should have been on the agenda for the bilateral Structural Impediments Initiatives (SII) talks. The U.S. initiated SII, presumably to get at the underlying causes of the trade barrier. Its delegation produced over 200 recommendations, while the Japanese countered with only a handful. Ishihara complains that, while Japan accepted a number of the major American proposals (such as a massive increase in public works spending), the U.S. delegation either turned down or responded vaguely to the Japanese ones. Ishihara's list of recommendations includes tightening the use of credit cards and reducing corporate dividend payments from quarterly to semi-annually. It deserves serious consideration.

He sees the future of Japan and the U.S. as closely linked, with each drawing upon the strengths of the other (provided Japan learns when to say no and when to say yes) to pull the less-developed parts of the world forward. He proposes we form a Group of Two, making use of the American lead in basic research and Japan's knack for management.

Meanwhile, Japan's cat's cradle of product distribution needs to be untangled (the Tokyo resident pays 40 percent more for goods than the New Yorker). He also thinks Japan should cast aside all of its arguments for preventing entry of U.S. rice into its market—a position viewed as heresy in Japan.

Despite its advanced billing as an "America-bashing" book, *The Japan That Can Say No* reflects the outlook of a man who admires such American characteristics as directness, initiative, loyalty, and innovation. Customary Japanese circumspection is absent from Ishihara's criticisms. He calls former Premier Yasuhiro Nakasone a "yes-man" in his relations with the U.S. He reserves special ire for what he sees as an obsequious and pusillanimous Japanese foreign ministry, calling for half of Japan's embassy staffs to be drawn from the private sector.

The author skips back and forth among his topics, with some duplication. He does, however, draw the threads together as he reaches his conclusion that the destinies of Japan and the United States are linked, that his country must get used to the fact that it is a world power and act accordingly, and that Americans must heed the old Chinese proverb, "When things go wrong, look in the mirror." □

Peter Hannaford, a frequent visitor to Japan, is head of a Washington-based public affairs firm.

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CORRESPONDENCE
(continued from page 7)

would prove, at least to me, that you are in fact independent of the trial bar. You have done great things for consumer protection, but you have consistently contributed to blocking auto insurance reform. Supporting good no-fault or choice no-fault would give you a chance to do great things for insurance consumer protection and for motorists.

I would like very much to meet with you, as you suggest in your letter. I had dinner with Joe Page last Friday, and he said he would try to arrange a meeting.

Sincerely,
Robert H. Joost

Michael Fumento Replies

Regarding the letter from John A. Owen in last month's Correspondence chiding me for not paying more attention to hydrogen in my November *TAS* piece on alternative fuels: The estimates I've heard on using hydrogen to power cars put it at twenty years away. Even if it were half that time, it would have no bearing on the Clean Air Act—which was the focus of my article, and which unfortunately passed just as it looked as if it were about to die. All the other fuels described in the article are currently being used in either commercial or passenger vehicles; hydrogen is not and thus can only be considered experimental.

Regarding Donald R. Wulfinghoff's pessimistic remarks in the January issue: It's true that, whether a car runs on gasoline or on electricity powered by a non-nuclear, non-hydro plant, it results in the burning of fossil fuel and the production of carbon dioxide. On the other hand, the conversion of fossil fuel into electricity that is then pumped into an EV battery is a vastly more efficient process than the direct burning of gasoline in an internal combustion engine. Electric plants are 60 to 70 percent efficient, internal combustion engines about 20 percent. Even allowing for power loss in the transfer from power plant to EV and for the higher carbon dioxide level of coal burning, according to such authorities as Dr. Donald Stedman, you still end up with a net carbon dioxide improvement with EVs.

Further, Mr. Wulfinghoff makes two political assumptions: that the nuclear industry will remain stunted despite continuing technological improvements, and that the global warming theory will become institutionalized. He may prove right on both, but since the science behind no-nukism and the "greenhouse effect" is faulty, I hold out hope that our country will come to see the light.

My forthcoming book will have a chapter on electromagnetic fields. Stay tuned, and don't throw away your electric blanket yet.

No practical car will ever run entirely on photovoltaics, but an EV's battery certainly could be supplemented by them. Most privately owned vehicles spend much more time sitting still than operating, and during that time photovoltaics implanted in the roofs, hoods, and windows could be refueling the batteries. Those batteries, as I noted, are improving slowly but surely. Ultimately, superconductors that operate at near room temperature might be used in a battery that is almost 100 percent efficient and knock internal combustion engines off the map. The fact EVs are being used as fleet vehicles as never before indicates they are making progress.

Julian Simon's thesis, though perhaps somewhat awkwardly stated by Mr. Wulfinghoff ("that the problems of the future are bound to be solved in the nick of time by our scientists and engineers"), is neither superstition nor a psychological disorder, but demonstrated fact. One should not make the mistake of confusing the failure of a given invention with failure of an idea. Clearly the Jarvik-7 artificial heart was a dismal failure, but does anyone doubt that someday artificial hearts will be practicable? The auto industry itself, in the last two decades, has borne out Simon's and my "superstition." In the early 1970s the energy crisis, in combination with strict new emissions standards, ushered in the dark days of the automotive age as symbolized by the mighty Ford Mustang becoming a Pinto clone. Today, cars are faster, safer, more fun, and less polluting than ever. Unless the bureaucrats and members of Congress succeed in regulating the auto industry to death, look for automobiles to continue to improve. And, yes, look for cars one day to leave behind fossil fuel much as ships left behind sails, an inevitable process that nevertheless took over a hundred years to complete.

—Michael Fumento
Littleton, Colorado

Once in Love with Amy

On December 15, at sundown, at his residence atop an icy slope in rural New Hampshire, P. J. O'Rourke, the author of—among other classics—*The Bachelor Home Companion*, foreclosed any further comment on the subject by tying the knot, or, as others would have it, the noose. P. J., the son of Placenta Marie and Chatsworth Antonio O'Rourke of Ethiopia, Ohio, married Miss Amy Lumet, daughter of Gail Buckley and Sidney Lumet, both of New York City, in a double-ring ceremony notable for its sauteed woodcock legs.

I flew from Washington and traversed icy roads in a desperate attempt to warn P. J. that were he to persist in this mad venture he would kill any future sales of *The Bachelor Home Companion* and deny Miss Lumet the fullness of her youth (she is twenty years his junior). Unfortunately, I arrived too late. P. J.'s best man and *chef du jour*, Morgan Entrekin, the distinguished publisher, had already made extensive preparations for a capital feast that would include several hundred exquisite little woodcock legs sauteed in olive oil *vergennes* to be washed down by an oaky chardonnay at the zenith of its potability. Only a disgusting vegetarian or a deviant teetotaler would spoil such a feast for the sake of literature. And so the Christian ritual took place, officiated by Mr.

Chris Bean, a local justice of the peace and noted divorce lawyer.

P. J. looked sober—no, somber. Amy was quite beautiful. The couple's friends may be divided into three categories: the Manhattan Swells, the Political Literati, and certain Early Americans who inhabit the hills and hollows of sylvan New Hampshire. All were equally represented in the half dozen or so witnesses attending the wedding and in far larger numbers in the mob that arrived shortly thereafter only to be told that the joke was on them. The wedding had already taken place. And let's attack those woodcock legs.

A shocking illustration of the sectionalism that still divides our Republic and fragments its commonality was provided by one of the Manhattan Swells. Confronted by an appetizing tray of a dozen or so well-turned woodcock legs, the pathetico inquired of an Early American standing nearby as to the number of legs on a woodcock. Or woodcoq, as the yuppie might say. It was a chill moment; but P. J., ever the gentleman and always the deft opponent of social hurt, interceded with a gallant riposte. "Hundreds, pal, the woodcock is a member of the centipede family." And off the benedict went to partake of a bottle of scotch and to complain that the ring finger of his left hand was beginning to ache.

Throughout the rest of the evening much hilarity prevailed, save for the fleeting altercation that followed when one of the Manhattan Swells insisted to one of the Political Literati that Operation Desert Shield would be a precise reprise of Napoleon's retreat from Russia or, even worse, of Vietnam. As logic and fact were against such grim scenarios, the writer, whose name I dare not divulge, poked his fingers quite hostilely in the Swell's eyes, but with no lasting damage. P. J., ever the gentleman, averted his gaze and opted for the scotch. It was Conservatism's Wedding of the Decade! *—RET*

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THE REX HARRISON SPECTATOR

BIDDING GOODBYE

by Thomas Mallon

The man at the lectern looks out over his half-glasses and asks the audience who will give him $275 for Richard Nixon. Actually, it is a copy of *The Real War* that's being auctioned, and the $600 it eventually fetches has to do not just with the book's author but also with the single copy's owner, the late Sir Rex Harrison (1908-1990), whose effects are being sold off this afternoon, December 13, 1990, at the William Doyle Galleries on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, the proceeds to benefit the scholarship fund bearing Sir Rex's name at Boston University.

Nixon's boilerplate inscription ("To Rex Harrison with appreciation for his incomparable contribution to excellence in the theatre and motion pictures") tells people something about the very quality that has to one degree or another brought them all here: style. You either have it or you don't.

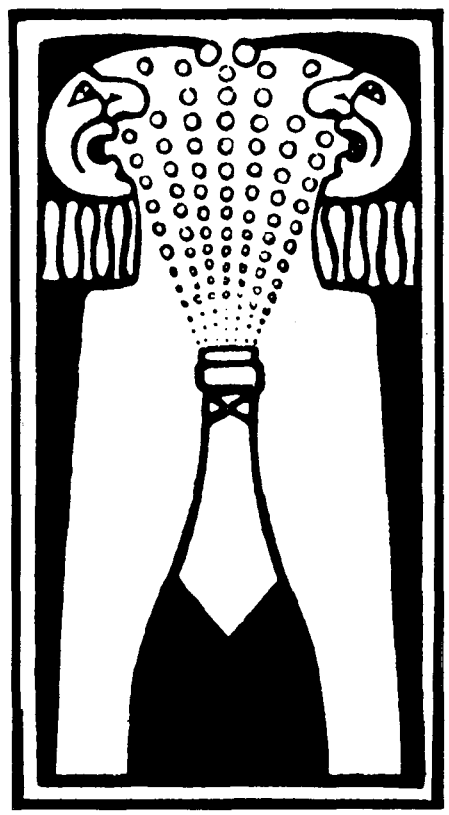
People have also come in search of clever Christmas presents, and a few holiday touches—poinsettias near the lectern, a Christmas tree behind a pegboard screen—further encourage the sentimentalized commerce. It will take less than three hours to sell more than two hundred lots, and if you lose track you can find which item is whizzing its way from Harrison's possession to that of someone here by consulting the red digital light attached to a pillar at the front. On a wall to the right of the auctioneer hangs a huge photo-portrait of Sir Rex, looking down upon the proceedings, slightly scandalized but rather more amused.

People took their seats early, the way they might for a hit play or a prominent man's wake. This is, of course, a bit of both, though two days ago, when one could "preview" the items for sale, the feeling was even more theatrical. Set out under the flashlight-shaped lamps of the gallery, Rex Harrison's possessions looked as if they had been acquired not in the course of somebody's long life, but during a set decorator's afternoon shopping spree. (An absence of squeamishness helped a potential bidder in his survey: he could flip through a rack of the departed's suits as if he were on the second floor of Macy's.)

The bidders are an entirely civilized group: well-dressed older women; pretty younger ones no doubt chatting ironically about the romantic impulse that brought them up here; stylish gay men calmly alert to the procedures of bidding. I sit with my all-day-sucker-shaped paddle, #302, recalling how a year ago this week I saw Rex Harrison do Somerset Maugham's *The Circle*, and was startled, alas, by his seeming in more urgent need of revival than the play. He had aged into something shuffling and simian, and yet, determined to keep his limited energies focused entirely on the props and people right in front of him—the audience was a distant irrelevance—he created a more forceful illusion of actually being his character than he probably did in many other productions, when just being Rex Harrison was more than enough to give the crowd its money's worth.

Along with his instructions about the state sales tax, the establishment of provenance, and so forth, the auctioneer offered a disclaimer—all items have "been used." It was spectacularly beside the point because, of course, it *is* the point. The first real bidding war—the auctioneer's pen pointing back and forth, like a metronome, between the potential purchasers—was over a shaving mug, manufactured by Mug Makers of Hollywood and inscribed "Rex." The catalogue suggested $10-15. The successful bidder paid $325. Lot #50, even more intimately tactile, some make-up and a hairpiece, went for $125. This hairpiece, held up high by one of the green-shirted porters who keep pace with the auctioneer, looked like something pulled up from a drain, but it's been the only thing bid upon by the young man in front of me, who wears a punkish black hat throughout the proceedings: a theatre student (a bald one?), perhaps. He fruitlessly offered $75.

In life, possessions give their owner status. In death, it's more like the reverse, the owner's celebrity, if he had it, electrifying the object with a personal history. Some objects in this auction, beneath that luster, have clear intrinsic worth, too: the "Provincial Louis XVI style fruitwood swivel armchair, used by Rex Harrison in his dressing room at every performance for make-up" combines handsomeness with hallowedness in a way that makes the final bid for it—$3,100, from someone in the audience competing with someone on the telephone—no surprise. With some pretty but less imposing items—a "Cartier sterling silver bookmark, inscribed 'Rex' "—one wants to know more. Did he actually use it to keep his place in the works of Shaw and Nixon, or was it a Christmas present *he* once got and promptly put in a drawer? One or two objects even become instruments of revenge. Surely Julie Andrews would be pleased to know that the framed stage bill for the London production of *My Fair Lady* is commanding $125 more than a poster for the movie version with Audrey Hepburn.



The paintings Harrison did late in life—Corsican and West Indian landscapes, mostly—prove to be the biggest disappointment of the day, the only class of items to bring consistently less than the gallery suggested. It's true that they're pretty awful: in this geriatric realm Harrison was no Winston Churchill. "It's upside down," the auctioneer has to tell the porter holding up Lot #119, "Beach Scene," before musing that it might bring more money that way. But, bad as they are, shouldn't their close contact with their owner—their maker—endow these paintings with even higher sentimental value than, say, the shaving mug? Does their failure come from their seeming effortful, things this man of ultimate insouciance had to worry over, rather than just deign to use? Is that why they seem uncharacteristic, of doubtful psychological provenance? They aren't *him*.

Whereas, of course, wool hats and cardigan sweaters were. These signature items are offered late in the auction, one by one. The catalogue shows that the original plan was to offer bunches of them in a few lots (the way the ties and shoes are disposed of), but someone has decided to split them up, a move that proves commercially shrewd. Lot #158, a box of fourteen sweaters, was estimated at $200-400. In the end, the new lot #158C, a single camel-hair cardigan sweater, sells for $450. A year ago the same gallery sold the possessions of Bette Davis. At that auction it was the ashtrays, of course.

By 5:00 I am on the bus heading back downtown, having purchased—for $75 plus tax—Rex Harrison's Victorian oak and silver-plated wine bucket. My sister had adored him, and this would be just right for her Christmas present. She later tells me that at her New Year's party it leaked all over the place, turning her dining-room table into a soggy plain. But she knew, too, that that was beside the point. □

Thomas Mallon's new novel, Aurora 7, *has just been published by Ticknor & Fields.*

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CURRENT WISDOM

Hearing of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee

A historic moment in the life of the 102nd Congress suitable for rebroadcast on "Saturday Night Live" or a documentary prepared by Mothers Against Drunk Driving:

SEN. WELLSTONE: Thank you, Senator Kennedy, for the—those of you who are students in the back of the room, I want you to listen carefully and tell me how I do. This is the first time that I have had a chance to speak here at the Senate. I didn't come with any notes or prepared to speak. But I want to say to the students and everyone else here that when I ran for office in Minnesota, I was so excited about what I think will be a very different decade in the '90s from what it was in the '80s. Senator Simon, I believe, was speaking in that direction. I think we will move in our country from a politics of private interest in the '80s to a politics of public interest in the '90s. And I would like to thank you Senator Kennedy for holding this hearing because my introduction, and again I want to speak especially to the students in the back—to the young people—my introduction—and again, I want to speak especially to the students in the back—to the young people—my introduction to the United States Senate has been an unusual introduction. Such a sobering time. Such a scary time. A time of life and death, and war and peace. And I certainly hope that we do not have to go to war—that there will be no war.

And my hope is that during this next decade, we will really begin to focus on key and crucial domestic needs. I have, as a teacher—and my whole adult life has been devoted to education—become more and more convinced, Senator, that there just can't be, and will not be, any real national security until we invest in the health and skills and character and intellect of our children. And that is—has to be a priority.

And I've become more and more convinced as I travel the state of Minnesota and other communities that a fundamental problem and a most important goal is for us to join all the other advanced economies in the world with affordable, dignified, humane health care, a national health care program, which the Senator has taken such a lead on.

And then finally, as long as we talk about national security, I just know—and some of you will smile, it's pricklings in my fingertips—that in the years to come—and I believe this committee will be crucial in thrusting this forward in the agenda of our country—we will come to realize that a big part of our definition of national security is going to be security of local communities; where there are jobs at decent wages, where there's a commitment to health care, and education, and housing, and the environment, and a credible energy policy. That's all a part of the future, I think for our country, a country I dearly love, and I'm just delighted to be here, and there could be no better committee for me to serve on in terms of where my passion goes, Senator, and what I believe so strongly in.

SEN. KENNEDY: Well said. (Laughter.)

[January 7, 1991]

Chinaberry Book Service
(Spring Valley, California)

In a New Age book catalogue of superb gibberings, a notice of still more Orwellian bibble-babble for the dunces:

FATHER GANDER
NURSERY RHYMES
Father Gander
(as opposed to Mother Goose)

re-written by Douglas Larche
illus. by Carolyn

If this book had been around eight years ago, Chinaberry Book Service would likely never have come to be. It was while reading our Mother Goose book to baby Elizabeth that I became aware for the first time how unsuitable many of the words were for young children. I not only changed many of those words on an impromptu basis, but found out, after research, that much of what we read to our children is inappropriate . . . unless we want them to get messages of violence, sexism and discrimination. I probably would have been lulled into thinking that there were plenty of this type of book available if I had run across it back then.

It's a collection of many Mother Goose Nursery Rhymes which have been adapted to reflect no sexism, violence or discrimination. . . . Listen to THIS . . .

"Peter, Peter pumpkin eater, had a wife and wished to keep her. Treated her with fair respect, she stayed with him and hugged his neck!" and THIS . . .

"There was an old couple who lived in a shoe, they had so many children they didn't know what to do. So they gave them some broth and some good whole wheat bread, and kissed them all sweetly and sent them to bed. There's only one issue I don't understand. If they didn't want too many, why didn't they plan?"

[Holiday Season 1990]

Washington Times

The modern journalist in action, Tom Knott:

The NFC winner, undoubtedly the 49ers, will do a number on either the Buffalo Bills or the Los Angeles Raiders in Tampa, Fla., next Sunday.

The 49ers will beat the Giants 24-14 because they have quarterback Joe Montana.

You don't have to be a brain surgeon to reach this conclusion. You don't even have to be an elementary school graduate. . . .

You do not wonder today, when it is Montana against Giants quarterback Jeff Hostetler. It is four Super Bowl rings against none. It is experience against inexperience. It is the best there ever was against a player

It is the best there ever was against a player who has made only five starts in seven seasons as a professional.

[January 19, 1991]

New York Times

Rousseau brought to life by two little pests:

"I'm not advocating this, but my daughter Amy's been arrested four times," Mr. Carter said, in demonstrations against apartheid and against United States policies toward Nicaragua. The vagaries of Federal domestic policies also make it incumbent upon private citizens to get involved, he said, adding, "Let's don't depend entirely on what a future President or Congress is going to do."

One student, Lydie Pierre-Louis, asked whether Mr. Carter was being too idealistic in preaching that a private citizen in the United States has the utmost authority.

"The ultimate authority in this country is the collective will of the American people," Mr. Carter replied.

Yet, Ms. Pierre-Louis pressed, this collective consciousness does not include every American.

To which Mr. Carter replied, "On Election Day, the potential is there, but you're right."

[December 13, 1990]

Herald
(Everett, WA)

On the editorial page of the *Herald*, a much-needed remonstrance to the guys that work the roads:

Signs of 'Men working' are a detour to women

How hard could it be to create "Road Crew Ahead" signs for the men and women who work at constructing and reshaping our highways? Men Working road signs look ludicrous in these days when women are increasingly found working in the trenches on the side of the highway.

[December 3, 1990]

Humanist

Upon receiving the "Humanist of the Year" accolade, Mr. Ted Turner turns into a hep cat:

So, I began to lose my faith. And the more I lost it, the better I felt.

I mean, it starts out with this notion that we're all *horrible*. We're all born in sin, and we're so bad that this wonderful person . . . and I'm sure Christ *was* a wonderful person. If he was here today, the way his stuff has been twisted around, he'd probably be sick at his stomach to see it. . . . But at any rate, he had to come down here and suffer and die on the cross so that with his blood our sins would be washed away. Weird, man, I'm telling you.

What's wrong with saying that we're basically good? Nobody has to die on the cross for us, with blood sacrifice. You know, all that old stuff about blood sacrifice, all those ancient religions did it—down there in the pyramids of Mexico, if they could find virgins, they cut their hearts out. Dumb thing to do to virgins. . . .

[January/February 1991]

New York Times

Confessions of a sports fan from the intellectual Miss Anna Quindlen:

Sunday the Super Bowl will be played in Tampa and so, inevitably, my thoughts turn to abortion.

[January 24, 1991]

Progressive

The beginning of a column by Mr. Gregory Conniff, possibly on the value of a high-fiber diet, or on changing one's filters, or maybe on how to score with one's girlfriend's mother—actually, by the second paragraph I lost consciousness:

Freedom has nothing to do with the efficient systems we set up to dispose of problems. Freedom is messy. Sometimes justice in a free society is not as swift as we would like. Sometimes law isn't the answer to the problem. But when we make a law to solve a problem, the law doesn't go away when the problem does. The law looks for its next application the way a predator looks for its next meal. It is the hand holding the law's leash at any given moment that determines what goes on the menu.

No issue is an island. . . .

[February 1991]

Los Angeles Times

Another grim excavation of the male mind, this time by Carol Lieberman, a Beverly Hills–based psychiatrist and witch doctor:

Only in our male-dominated society and entertainment industry would films be rated more harshly for sex, not violence. Men feel more uncomfortable about sex scenes than violent ones because sex scenes evoke men's unconscious conflicts, including castration anxiety, homophobia, fears of inadequacy and impotence. Violent scenes, on the other hand, enhance men's feelings of power. So whether one wants to attribute it to performance anxiety or testosterone, the male predilection for violence has been affecting the rating system for years.

[October 1, 1990]

Tampa Tribune

Humanitarian protest from an enlightened Tampan:

Re: *Around Tampa*, Aug. 13. Columnist Mary Jo Melone's description of the Tampa police rookies as stupid, and "who barely know how to cross town without help" was unwarranted and cruel. Difficulty with "reading, writing and counting" could well result from lack of education, rather than from a deficiency in intelligence.

An apology is in order.

—*James Zuiker*
New Port Richey

[September 9, 1990]

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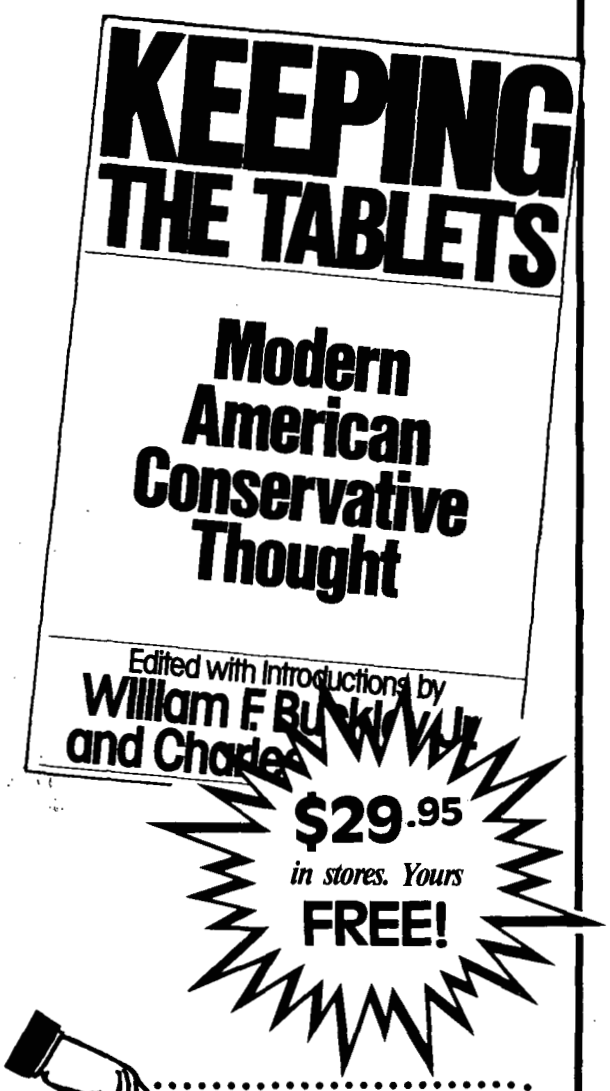

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